

SELMA EKREM  
MAP BY RAYMOND LUFKIN

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SELMA EKREM

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TO  
*Lucy Embury*

A friend of the small nations,  
with deep gratitude for her  
interest and encouragement.



## *About the Author*

SELMA EKREM was born in Turkey and has lived part of her life in that country and part in the United States, where she is in the office of the Turkish Consul in New York. She is the granddaughter of the Turkish poet and patriot, Namik Kemal, and her father was an educator and writer, also governor of Jerusalem and the Aegean Islands.

Miss Ekrem is the author of *Unveiled*, an autobiography published by Ives Washburn; and she has lectured on Turkey.

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## *Turkey, Land of Contrasts*

THE train, like a long fat snake, curves over the high Anatolian plateau, following the route where caravans of old slowly and majestically wound their way to the far corners of the Ottoman Empire. The country leading to the new capital, Ankara, is austere and barren. Scattered houses cling to the soil, bracing themselves against the wind that sweeps over the treeless plains that once were covered with dense forests. Here and there peasants ride their small and docile donkeys and stop to look at the Ankara express as it whistles shrilly and urgently. The train is the symbol of the West in this land where so many ancient civilizations have flourished, risen to greatness and fallen into decay—the land which today we call Turkey.

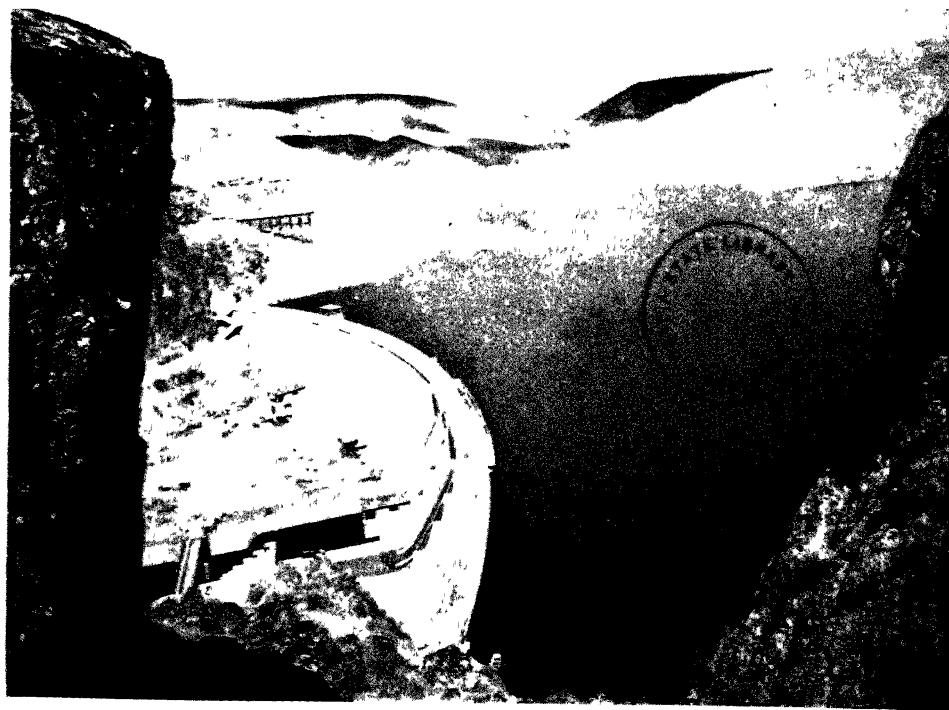
The new Turkey, with windows opening to the east and to the west, is a maze of contrasts. Nowhere is the contrast so sharp as it is in Ankara, where the train puffs to a stop at a modern railway station after a long and

weary journey from Haydar Pasha, which is an Asiatic suburb of Istanbul.

The new capital is young, it has drawn its inspiration from the ideals of the Republic, it is a graft of western civilization upon an ancient land. Its buildings of indefinite architecture stand raw and new under the blazing summer sun; the rich hand of history has not mellowed them as it has in other parts of Turkey. In one of the many squares stands a huge equestrian statue of Kemal Ataturk, the first President, while below him is a Turkish soldier, bayonet in hand. Ankara was born in the midst of violent struggle; it was the cradle of the new Republic, and the man whose many statues dominate the capital was the father of the new Turkey.

Let us follow this young peasant who has stepped out of the train. There is wonderment on his beardless face. It is his first visit to Ankara, whose fame has echoed widely in his little village. He has never seen a city like Ankara before, not even in his dreams. A true peasant of Anatolia, he has toiled on the land from childhood and never expected to leave his village except to be drafted into the army, for military service is compulsory in Turkey. He ambles slowly down a wide avenue where acacia trees raise their trunks in young vigor. There were no trees some years ago, the soil was too barren and water was scarce and precious. But today hundreds of trees rise from the dust of ages, their tender young leaves casting a faint shadow on asphalt roads. Motor cars, trucks and buses whizz by while the traffic policeman, standing on a wooden platform and shaded by a huge umbrella in the summer, directs the steady flow of machines.

The young peasant has come to Ankara to build more roads and work on new buildings, for Ankara is still growing. He has left his farm, lured by good pay, and thus the Republic has given him a chance to see the rest of Turkey. Hundreds like him have flocked to the city, most of them walking all the way from their villages. Many of them brought their families along and lugged their mattresses and bedding for miles. Their handiwork is all about the city. The new Grand National Assembly building with its surrounding parks was erected by them. In another section of the city lie the government offices, built of stone, with large windows letting in the air and sunshine. There are new schools, museums and a stadium reserved for a variety of sports. The hotels are modern, while the stone houses that rise in the residential section are reminiscent of modest American suburban homes. Many have gardens about them where roses, wisteria and honeysuckle bloom in the spring. Ankara has good theaters and movie houses, club houses and even night clubs and American bars, where foreigners and



The Cubuk Dam in the vicinity of Ankara

A bird's-eye view of Ankara



Turks mingle to eat, to drink and to dance. The Turks love American jazz.

Nearby is a park with a small-scale replica of the Sea of Marmora and the experimental farm of Kemal Atatürk, which he left to the Turkish nation at his death. The first President of Turkey was also a gentleman farmer and on this farm experiments were carried out which proved of vast benefit to the whole country. The park and the farm are now open to the public and the former has become a summer playground where families come to picnic or sit at the many cafés which overlook the immense pond shaped like the Sea of Marmora.

The water supply of the city is now assured by the imposing Cubuk Barrage, a vast irrigation system and the most ambitious one of its kind in Turkey. It not only supplies water to Ankara but to many of the surrounding villages where drought for centuries had crippled production. The dam is also a pleasure resort, for it is surrounded by gardens and out-of-door cafés where the élite of Ankara can dine and cool off during the hot summer nights.

Out on the airfield the future aviators of Turkey are being trained. Young boys and girls fill the large classrooms of the modern schools. Some of the girls will graduate as doctors, judges and nurses; others are learning a trade in the vocational schools. The women riding in the automobiles and buses all wear hats and modern clothes. Ankara is new, it is European in flavor, it is busy, for Ankara is the nerve center of the new Türkiye.

But let us follow this road that seems to draw us to the hillside. It leads into a small and steep path made of packed mud and rough stones. The din of motor cars dies down and we are in another world. This is the old town slumbering on its height, withdrawn within itself, doomed to be torn down some day to make room for vast new buildings. Here one can see open-air bazaars where the fruits and vegetables are piled on the ground and where peasants from nearby villages sell their fresh eggs and their poultry. In small shops tucked below unpainted houses one can buy wooden shoes, blue beads to ward off the Evil Eye, old-fashioned farm implements, wicker baskets, spices and pickles in large jars. Lattices still adorn the windows of the black wooden houses to keep off inquisitive glances. All about one can see women wearing the traditional black kerchief over their heads and children roaming over the hill. Old *kahans* (Turkish inns) stand in ruins, some of them now used as storage houses. It is at these *kahans* that the caravans of old stopped overnight. Their dim courtyards seem to ring with the pawing of horses' hoofs and the bustle of many feet. There are goats and sheep ambling in the



A typical Anatolian village street with the minaret of a mosque to the left

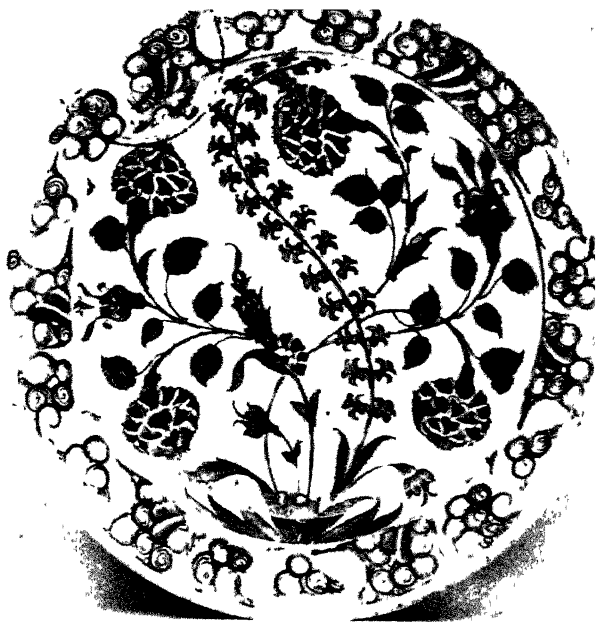


fields, the sweet tinkling of their bells is the only sound that disturbs the somnolent town.

At the top of the hill stands an ancient citadel with thick walls made of enormous blocks of stone; once it watched over the safety of old Ankara. Today women and children sit amidst the crumbling stones and take the air, or, seated on straw mats, they picnic in leisure, their wicker baskets filled with food and earthenware jars of sweet drinking water close to their elbows. The gateway of the old fort is guarded by two crouching lions carved out of granite many thousands of years ago, probably by the Hittites, whose empire was full of vigor and majesty long before the Turks came to Asia Minor. The secret of the past is sealed in their half-closed eyes.

Once the top of the old fortress is reached, one can see the new Ankara spread below with its modern buildings, its young trees, and the hundreds of lights burning brightly at night. Ankara is like an island of light in the midst of a sea of darkness. There are no towns nearby, only the arid plateau rising all about. In the vast darkness that envelops the land, one can still feel the throbbing of past splendor. About a hundred miles east of Ankara once rose Hattosas, the great Hittite capital, now a small village. Another hundred miles to the south is the city of Konia, the capital of the Seljuk Empire where the remains of Seljuk art and architecture fill the visitor with astonishment. Wherever one turns in Turkey one can see the remains of ancient civilizations—massive castles, stout forts surrounded by moats, walled cities, temples dedicated to many gods, remains of bridges and aqueducts that span the rivers. Inscriptions in many languages are carved into crumbling stones. The soil contains bits of Greek pottery, broken-down Sumerian rings, Roman coins and bits of marble from the many statues unearthed in recent years.

\*The crumbling citadel with its granite lions is a mute reminder of that turbulent and wealthy past. But below on the plain lies Ankara, the modern capital, an upstart in years but a citadel of the West planted in the midst of old Anatolia.



## *At Home Among the Turks*

THE early-morning sun shines on the snow-covered peaks of the Taurus Range and throws a golden glow upon the thousands of minarets and the round domes of the mosques. Out in the fields the stacks of fragrant hay are covered with dew. Oranges and lemons glisten as if their faces had been scrubbed and polished by the night. The first rays of the sun beat upon the windowpanes of the small houses clustered about the narrow and crooked streets of an Anatolian village. It is time to get up, for the peasants tell time by the sun. They have no clocks in their homes and very few of them own watches. Below each house is the stable, and the smell of freshly mown hay and animals drifts upward. One can hear the animals pawing the ground restlessly, waiting to be fed and let out into the daylight.

The farmer rises from his mattress stretched on the floor. He is not wealthy enough to own a bed, but his mattress is soft and he sleeps soundly



This peasant boy leads an ox-cart loaded with hay

on it, as do his wife and children on theirs. His wife, too, gets up, and they dress in a hurry and splash their faces with cold water from the large metal pitcher standing near the kitchen sink. Most village houses have no running water and the women carry it from the village fountain standing in the square. They gather by it early in the morning and again late in the evening with their tin cans and pitchers and exchange greetings while their implements are getting full. As for drinking water, it is brought from springs by the children.

While the farmer takes buckets of fresh cold water to his oxen and his donkeys and feeds them, his wife is out in the field back of the house milking the sheep. She wears a typical Anatolian costume: a pair of loose baggy trousers, a tight-fitting padded jacket which covers part of her trousers, and a wide woolen scarf wound several times about her waist. Over her head, covering her hair and her chin, is a gayly colored scarf, the loose ends of which are neatly tucked in one side, holding the kerchief in place. She



A peasant woman milks her sheep

crouches before the odd-shaped wooden pail which soon will be filled with warm sweet milk. Anatolians as a whole drink sheep's milk and also use it to make yogurt and cheese. Yogurt is like clabbered milk, and every Anatolian woman makes it in her home; a nourishing food eaten not only by the village people but in the cities as well.

The animals fed and the sheep milked, the farmer sets out for his field. He owns less than an acre of land, on which he raises wheat. There are few large landowners in Turkey and most of the land is parcelled out in small lots among the peasants. Our farmer is poor, he cannot afford modern machinery and tractors such as the wealthy farmers have. He cuts the earth in long furrows, using a wooden plow drawn by a team of oxen, just as his father and generations before him did. Wheat is threshed in some sections of Turkey by a crude wooden board on which the women and children sit to give it more weight.

The farmer wears trousers that have been patched and repatched by his

wife. His shirt is open at the throat, and over his head he wears a much-battered cap with the visor turned back. The heavy woolen socks knitted at home by his wife keep his feet warm and over them he wears shoes that have neither laces nor straps and can easily be taken off when he enters the house or prays in the mosque. Most Turkish people wear slippers at home or go about in their stocking feet so as to keep the rugs and the floors clean. Moslems do not have to go to the mosque to pray, and many people pray at home, especially the women. A small prayer rug is stretched on the floor and on it the worshipper kneels and touches his forehead to the rug. Often, too, one can see the farmer stop his work and pray on the grass, facing Mecca, without a rug or even a rag stretched beneath him.

The shepherd goes from house to house gathering the sheep of the neighborhood. He knows the animals of each household and at night will return them to their rightful owners. He wears a woolen *aba* (a sleeveless coat) thrown over his shoulders, and tucked under one arm is his *kaval* (a crude instrument like a flageolet). While the sheep wander over the green meadow, the shepherd plays on his *kaval*, sometimes a gay tune but more often a plaintive song in a minor key. He reads not a single note but he can fill the air with sweet music while his shaggy dog watches over the flock.

Over a country lane a little boy is leading a team of docile oxen hitched to a wooden cart in which the hay is piled sky-high. What a lovely embroidered vest he wears over his homemade shirt! And just like his father, he has a long, wide scarf wound several times about his waist, holding his tight-fitting trousers in place. He, too, wears a cap on his head at a jaunty angle and carries a big stick with which to goad the sleepy animals. His little brothers and sisters are still sound asleep in the small stone house, but the boy is old enough to help his parents with the farm chores. The younger children when they wake up will be dressed, washed and fed by their grandmother and they will run to the newly erected whitewashed schoolhouse standing proudly in the village square. And there, under the supervision of a young woman teacher who comes from a nearby town, they will learn their new Latin alphabet. Education is compulsory in Turkey, both for boys and girls.

As the sun rises higher in the sky, it is time for the little towns and the cities to awake. The silence is broken by the morning noises which grow stronger as the day advances. The muezzin calls the faithful to prayer from the tall minarets, his chant-like prayer now rising loudly and then being carried away by the breeze. The cocks crow loudly from the barns and the



Tossing sheaves onto a threshing machine

red-tiled roofs of the houses. Out in the harbors, tugboats and motor-driven barges chug noisily. The fishermen, homeward bound after a good catch, sing a haunting melody as they draw in their nets. Trolleys clang along, trains whistle, motor cars swish by, while factory whistles toot noisily.

Let us visit the house of Ali Efendi which stands in the midst of a small garden surrounded by a stone wall. The Turkish people are very hospitable, they love entertaining, especially strangers, and I am sure that Ali Efendi and his family will not mind if we drop in on them early in the morning.

Ali Efendi is a well-to-do merchant and he lives in a small Anatolian town. He really has a modest income compared with American ones; enough to feed and clothe his large family, put some aside for a rainy day and for the poor who happen to knock at his door. The great industrialists, the bankers, the Fords and Rockefellers do not exist in Turkey. Salaries are very low, government officials are underpaid, farmers make enough to feed themselves, and the so-called wealthy people whose fortunes might run into thousands of dollars are very few indeed.

The house is made of wood like the majority of Turkish homes, although in some sections of Turkey, where wood is scarce, they are of stone. The poorer village houses are of baked mud with thatched roofs. This is a square, box-like house, two stories high with a balcony overlooking the garden where grow a few rosebushes, honeysuckle, lilacs and fragrant violets. Pots of rose geranium and a sweet-smelling herb known as *utir* line the window sills. Turkish people love flowers and even the humblest hut will have a flower pot or two. In the evening Ali Efendi will tend his flowers and amble slowly in his garden, which is crisscrossed by small paths. His garden has no lawn, it takes money to grow the luxuriant grass so common in America. There is no garage back of the house, as Ali Efendi does not own a car or even a carriage. Cars, radios and refrigerators are considered a luxury, as none of these commodities are made in Turkey and have to be imported mostly from America.

While we are wandering in the garden and perhaps smelling the beautiful red rosebud which is Ali Efendi's pride, the door of the kitchen is pushed aside and an elderly woman appears in the garden, *mangal* in hand. The mangal is a brazier in which charcoal is burned and it is used both for cooking and heating. It is made of copper or brass or iron sheeting and comes in all sizes and shapes. Some of them are beautiful, with many designs hammered in the metal, and are just as ornamental to a room as they are useful.

There are many families, those who live in the principal towns and cities, who use gas for cooking, but the majority depend on their charcoal brazier, which has to be lighted early in the morning. Let us watch the old lady lighting hers. I should first introduce her to you, as, because of her age, she holds an honored position in Ali Efendi's household. She is his mother-in-law who, at the death of her husband, came to live with her daughter. Ali Efendi still lives like a patriarch of old surrounded by his wife, his mother-in-law, his unmarried daughters, his married son and daughter-in-law and an orphan girl whom Ali Efendi is bringing up. His younger son is away studying at Ankara where he hopes to become an engineer. In a household like Ali Efendi's, sons who are married live with their parents as was the custom in the past. The Turkish people also make a point of taking care of elderly, poorer relatives.

Grandmother wears a loose cotton dress and over it a padded cotton jacket, while her head is covered by a white kerchief. Her hair is hennaed and so are the tips of her fingernails, which indicates that she is quite old-fashioned and follows the ancient Turkish customs. Henna was used extensively in the past by the women. It was said that the prophet Mohammed dyed his beard with this reddish-orange powder obtained from the leaves of the henna tree, an Oriental shrub, and the use of henna became almost a ritual.

Grandmother crouches before the *mangal* and removes some of the ashes in a tin can. She reaches for the sack of coal and dumps shovelful in the brazier. A wad of paper is then inserted between the coals and lighted. As the charcoal catches fire, granny lays a stove pipe on top and fans the fire with a fan made of chicken or goose feathers. Once the charcoal is blazing and the smoke ceases to pour out of the pipe, she gets up slowly and carries the *mangal* into the kitchen. The lighting of the stove is usually done outdoors, as burning charcoal in a closed room is apt to asphyxiate one.

Once in the kitchen, the old lady covers the glowing embers with ashes so the coal will burn slowly and last longer. It is time to prepare the all-important coffee without which no Turk can go through the day. Not only in Ali Efendi's kitchen but all over Turkey; in cities, towns, villages; in houses, apartment houses and huts the delicious aroma of coffee is wafted on the air.

By then Ali Efendi's wife has come down and the two women are busy in the kitchen preparing breakfast. It is grandmother who brews the coffee. In Ali Efendi's house coffee is never bought ready-ground. Grandmother



would not hear of drinking "market coffee" to which, she is sure, has been added ground chick peas and other undesirable substitutes. Ali Efendi brings the green beans from his shop at least once a week and his mother-in-law roasts them in an earthenware frying pan over a low charcoal fire, stirring the beans with a wooden spoon so they will not burn. The smell of roasting coffee spreads throughout the house. Once the beans are done to a turn, she grinds them in a wooden contraption, turning the handle for long weary minutes until they are transformed into a fine powder. Naturally she cannot resist the smell of that freshly ground coffee and immediately makes a cup for herself which she drinks in slow sips with loud noises. The more noise one makes drinking coffee, the better one shows one's appreciation, although the young people of today, those whose heads are full of Western ways, as grandmother would say, are careful to drink theirs silently. Coffee is roasted and ground a little at a time so it will always remain fresh, and when grandmother was young she used to do both roasting and grinding every day of the week.

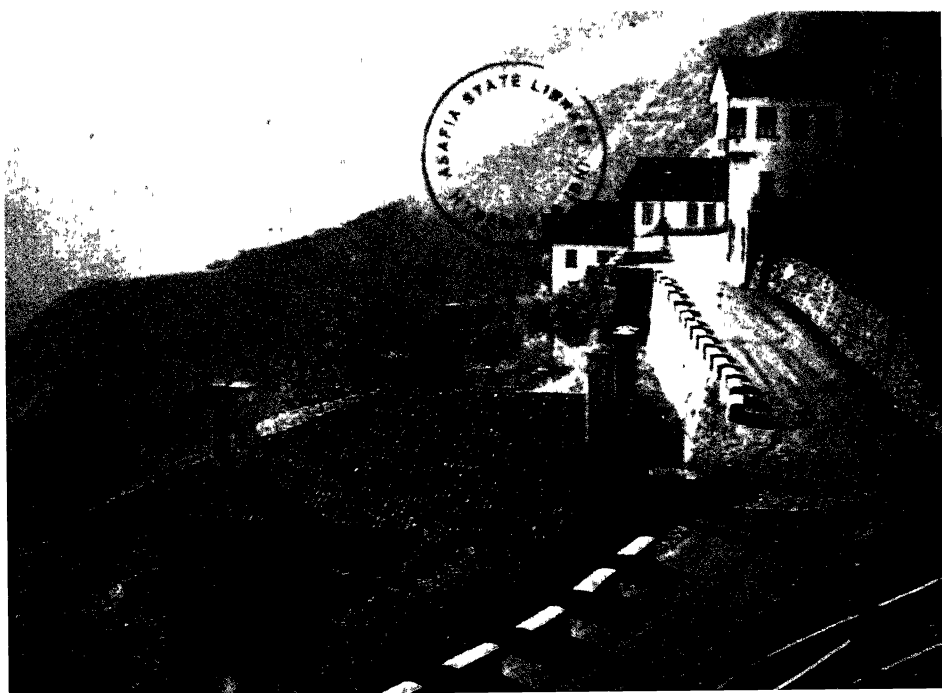
The coffee tray stands in a corner of the kitchen table and on it are two small bowls, one for sugar, the other for coffee, a spoon on a small plate,

Country house in the southern part of Turkey



two long-handled brass coffee pots and six small cups: the whole covered with a white napkin. The old lady measures the water and pours it into the *cezve* (Turkish coffee pot) which she gently thrusts close to the ash-covered embers. A slow fire is required to make good Turkish coffee, which is taken with or without sugar, depending on the individual's taste, but always served black. When the water starts to hum, sugar is added, and just before it starts to boil, grandmother removes the pot from the fire. She pours a little of the water from the pot into a cup and adds to the pot the finely pulverized coffee, a teaspoon for each cup, and sets the pot again on the fire. In a minute the brown foam begins to rise, slowly at first and then faster. At the right time, just before it overflows, granny takes off the pot for the last time and pours the water, previously removed, over the brown bubbles, to settle the grounds. The coffee is now ready to be served. Grandmother wipes the small cups with a napkin, although they are absolutely clean, and divides the brown foam equally between the cups, filling them to the brim with the remaining liquid. In this way each cup will have on top a layer of appetizing foam, without which coffee is not coffee. One can detect the novice by the foamless coffee he serves, which is called derisively "chestnut water"

Village at the foothills of the Taurus Mountains



by the connoisseur and those who know how to make good coffee.

You may think that I have dwelt too long on this subject. But coffee in Turkey is not a mere beverage which one drinks with meals. It is the traditional cup of welcome offered to all visitors all hours of the day; it soothes the weary and the sad of heart and brings people together in warm companionship.

Breakfast does not take long in a Turkish home, as people eat very little in the morning. Mother and daughter drink their small cups of coffee in which they dunk a slice of bread. Dunking is quite proper in Turkey. Sometimes they nibble a few black olives with their bread. The olives are quite salty, as they are kept in brine, and their skins are as wrinkled as granny's face. It is also customary in some families to have tea for breakfast. In fact, tea is consumed almost as much as coffee and it is often served in small, rounded Persian glasses.

Ali Efendi soon joins the women in the kitchen, where he, too, sips his cup of coffee noisily and then sets out for his shop. It is still early and the rest of the household are in bed, except the eldest son, who is getting ready to join his father in the shop where he, too, works. The old man ambles leisurely through the narrow streets and greets neighbors and acquaintances on the way. Here there is not the bustle and hurry of large cities. People live through the hours and do not rush through them. Ali Efendi is headed for the market place where his shop is situated and which is the business district of the little town. Already the place is thronged with peasants from the surrounding villages, who have travelled by donkey and ox cart to trade in the town. They have brought with them the produce of their small farms: chickens, eggs, vegetables, salted cheese, butter, homemade noodles and bulgur (cracked wheat which takes the place of rice in poorer houses). The peasants are scattered all about the market square, their wares spread on the ground. Most of them wear Anatolian costume, while Ali Efendi has on a European suit. Here is a young man standing by his chickens, talking to an elderly peasant. What a gorgeous fellow he is! His long woolen socks come up to his knees and are beautifully embroidered in many colors and have a small tassel on the top of each. Short, full knickers fall to his knees, which are bare, and about his waist is the biggest sash in the whole place. The woolen scarf is wound tightly about his waist, coming almost up to his chest, and makes him stand erect as if he were wearing a corset. His black cotton shirt has flowers printed upon it, a lovely material that any woman might envy. His black eyes shine merrily as he exchanges jokes with the



A peasant from central Anatolia in his fineries

others from his village. The Anatolian peasant as a rule enjoys a good joke.

Farther away an old man has set up shop by spreading a piece of cloth on the ground. On it are spread his bolts of cotton material. He has removed his shoes and stands on his merchandise while he measures a piece for a customer crouched close to him. His shoes have elastic sides and can be easily removed. Many people still cling to this type of shoe.

After having sold their products, the peasants will flock to Ali Efendi's shop to buy what they need. That worthy man now hurries through the market place, which is made up of numerous narrow, meandering streets and divided into many sections. In one the coppersmiths are at work and the noise of their hammers pounding the red metal is deafening. Farther on are the cobblers, the tinsmiths, the harness makers, and from another section rises the heart-warming smell of freshly baked bread.

Ali Efendi has the largest store in the town and it is a wonderful place to be in! No wonder the peasants who come in for the first time stand about with their mouths open in astonishment. Every corner, every shelf is full; there are even goods hanging from the wall and the ceiling. I am sure the worthy merchant himself does not know all that lies helter-skelter in his shop. The smell of spices, cheese, cured meat mingle with that of harness leather and soap. There are bolts of cotton goods, sweaters, caps, kerchiefs for little girls, needles and thread, nails in barrels, green coffee beans in sacks, colored candies for the children, tobacco for the men and even aspirin tablets. The peasants stand on one foot and gape incredulously. Ali Efendi knows them well and he lets them take their time. Soon the men fumble in their wide scarf belts where they keep their purses and tobacco and other odds and ends. The purses are made of heavy homespun material finely embroidered. One of the men is counting his change slowly, pondering whether he will have enough to buy that beautiful bolt of cotton goods to make dresses for his wife and children. He clears his throat and casually asks the price. Ali Efendi, equally casually, tells him he will give the whole for two liras (about a dollar). The peasant looks simple but he is as shrewd and as good a bargainer as the merchant. Of course, no one in Turkey would dream of buying anything without indulging in that little game known as bargaining. The peasant slashes the price into half. The merchant laughs and puts aside the material. His good friend from the village is joking, the bolt cost him more than the price offered. The bargaining lasts a few minutes, the merchant coming down in his price a notch, the peasant going up in his offer until they strike a happy medium and the bargain is clinched. The

merchant says, "Wear it with laughter," as the peasant puts the bolt under his arm and parts with his money. Ali Efendi has really no desire to charge more, for he is a God-fearing man and would not think of taking more for his goods than enough to cover cost and an honest profit. He prays five times a day and believes in all the principles laid down by the prophet Mohammed. One of them is honesty. But bargaining is not to squeeze more money out of your customer; it is only an exchange of wits, like a chess game; and the customer would feel cheated if he were not given the privilege of haggling over the price.

When the last customer leaves the shop, Ali Efendi settles in his chair and toys with his prayer beads. His is a short string made of amber, grown dark with age and use. Prayer beads are not only used during prayers but throughout the day while talking or simply resting, as Ali Efendi is doing. The wealthy families of old had long strings made of amber, coral or sandalwood with pearl tassels. Many of these beautiful and priceless strings can now be seen in our museums.

Soon a friend of the merchant's drops in. At that Ali Efendi's son calls the *kahvedji* (the coffee maker), whose shop is tucked among larger ones in the bazaars. It is the busiest one in the town and the old man and his son, aged fifteen, are cooking coffee or brewing tea and taking orders all through the day. It is really a tiny booth whose walls are lined with hooks from which hang the small cups and the different-sized pots, while the Persian glasses for tea are stacked on a table.

The *kahvedji's* small son clatters over the cobblestones to take the orders. He knows the taste of each customer and which one likes his coffee or tea sweet and which one strong. In five minutes he reappears swinging an odd round tray which has rounded strips meeting at the top and forming a handle. Although he swings the tray at a perilous angle, not a drop spills. This custom of drinking coffee or tea while working is quite general in Turkey and throughout the Near East as well. Even the modern office buildings have a small coffee shop. If one drops in about 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. in Turkish business houses and government offices, one can see the men and women stop their labors and sip their daily quota.

It is almost noon now and the smell of *doner kebab* drifts from the small restaurant in the bazaar and slowly permeates the shops and teases the appetite. *Doner kebab* is a favorite Turkish meat dish. Pieces of lamb are rounded and trimmed and stuck on an iron spike which revolves before a cupboard-like contraption full of burning charcoal. As the spike revolves, the lamb

browns slowly and evenly and the drippings are gathered in a tray on which rests the spike. When done, the cook will cut thin slivers of the brown and delicious lamb and serve it with *pilaf*, a rice dish.

While Ali Efendi is busy waiting on his customers, drinking his coffee, eating his *doner kebab*, what are the women of his household doing? The women have not been idle either. There is work to be done in a Turkish house, and work without the modern conveniences to which we are so accustomed here takes a great deal of time.

Ali Efendi's wife and two daughters set out to clean the house, a job that is done every day, for they are extremely clean. The women sweep the rooms with short-handled brooms; the small rugs are hung on a line in the garden and beaten with heavy clubs. The wooden staircase is scrubbed by hand, while buckets of water are splashed over the entrance hall paved with stone. The water drains through a hole in one of the stone slabs.

Grandmother meanwhile is busy in the kitchen preparing the most important meal of the day, which is eaten at night when the menfolks return from work. Not that she has to work! She could, if she wanted to, sit cross-legged on her *minder* (a low Turkish sofa) and rest all day long. Allah only knows that the other women would be willing to do all the cooking. But granny will not have it that way. She believes that work is good for her and keeps her young. In her secret heart she also thinks that the young people cannot cook as well as she does.

What a cheerful, sunny place the kitchen is! Round copper pots, without handles, gleam from the shelves or hang from hooks on the wall. The inside of each is lined with a thin coating of tin so that the food may be cooked without fear of poisoning the people who eat it. When reddish streaks appear through the tin, the utensils are given to the *kalaydji*, the man who applies the lining, and who goes by every day with a huge basket on his back, calling out, "Kalaydji, kalaydji," in a rich, deep voice. A bunch of parsley and dill are stuck in a glassful of water standing before the window. These herbs, as well as fresh mint, are grown in the garden. In addition to the *mangal*, under which is curled a cat in the winter time, there is also a crude stove with four grilled receptacles in which charcoal is burned. It is surprising what a feast can be turned out with these primitive implements, a meal worthy of the mouth of a prince.

Turkish people spend a great deal of time in the kitchen. Vegetables are never boiled and served with a dab of butter. Heavens, no! The Turks would be aghast at the very idea! They are either cooked in olive oil with



A quiet stream on the outskirts of a village

plenty of onions and served cold, or with lamb, onions, tomatoes and butter and served hot. It takes very long to prepare one vegetable in this fashion. The onions are sliced very fine, fried in plenty of butter together with small pieces of meat, and then the vegetables are neatly arranged in rows following the contour of the round copper pots. To prepare eggplant, tomato and green pepper *dolmas*, granny spent a good part of the day. There are several kinds of *dolmas*, vegetable, meat or fish, and the stuffing for each varies as well. Let us see how granny prepares the one mentioned above, which is called "the three brothers." First she cuts off a slice from the top of



each vegetable and lays them aside in a plate. After that she scoops out the inside of each, taking care not to pierce the skin. That done, she slices plenty of onions—and I mean plenty—fries them with rice in olive oil until amber-colored, adding salt and sugar before taking the frying pán off the fire. The concoction has to cool, and when lukewarm, granny takes some in her fingers and fills each scooped-out vegetable, covering each one with its respective lid. The vegetables thus stuffed are laid in a big, round copper pot, egg-plants at the bottom, tomatoes on top, a little hot water added and the whole laid on a slow-burning fire where the dolmas will simmer for an hour or two until tender. When done, granny removes them on a large platter and puts it in front of the window to get cold.

Does grandmother take a rest after this long and tiring operation? Of course not. The main dish has yet to be prepared. It happens to be *beurek*, a pastry filled with cheese or ground lamb. She rolls out the dough in sheets as thin as tissue paper. Then she prepares the filling: salted cheese mixed with eggs and parsley, worked into a smooth paste. A copper tray is lined with a layer of dough and one of cheese filling until the top is reached. Grandmother covers the tray with a sheet of tin and lays it on the brazier. On the tin cover she piles burning embers, and quick as a wink she has an excellent oven where the *beureks* will turn brown and crisp. For a meat course, a *kapama* (which means “covered”) will do if it is spring. The *kapama* consists of large pieces of lamb which are cooked for an hour or two with plenty of lettuce, scallions and dill. The meal will be rounded off by *pilaf*, and granny decides she will cook it in tomato juice. Turkish pilaf is not like the boiled rice served in America. Each grain stands out by itself and is cooked until tender but not too long. Nothing tastes better than Turkish pilaf if done right.

You can gather from this that Turkish cooking is vastly different from American and there are endless varieties of preparing vegetables and meat. Our *shish kebab*, small pieces of lamb put on a skewer and broiled over a charcoal fire, and served with an herb known as *keklik*, is the best way to eat lamb in any country. Beef is not eaten as much as lamb, and the Moslem religion prohibits the eating of pork. Grandmother, for instance, would not allow pork to cross her lips, but the younger people do not mind eating ham occasionally.

The women in towns and villages also spend a great deal of time getting food ready for winter. Ali Efendi's wife has a hand for making jam and pickles, and during the spring and summer months she spends many days

in the kitchen putting up these delicacies. Strawberry jam, for instance, takes two days to cook. The berries are hulled, washed and then laid in layers in a copper cauldron with sugar sprinkled in between, one pound to two pounds of berries. The juice of several lemons is squeezed on top and the whole allowed to remain overnight. The next day the cauldron is put on the brazier and cooked slowly until the berries grow plump and the liquid thickens to the consistency of honey. Only an expert like Ali Efendi's wife can cook strawberry jam so the fruit remains whole and appetizing as if freshly picked. If allowed to cook too long, the jam will have a slightly burned taste and will be ruined.

In the summer, when tomatoes are plentiful, women prepare a succulent tomato paste which is exposed to the sun for several days. Put away in jars, with olive oil poured on top, the paste will keep fresh and sweet for a year. It is used in cooking vegetables when fresh tomatoes are not available.

Village women make their own cheese and butter, which they salt down in tin cans for the winter. On the flat tops of their houses and huts, the peasants dry their beans, chick peas, horse beans and *bulgur*. In the most primitive villages the wheat, to make bulgur, is cracked in a hollowed-out stone by women working their wooden pistons. Often one can see three or more women swinging their rounded clubs in perfect rhythm, standing over one stone. The wheat is cracked, hulled and turned into bulgur, which is eaten instead of rice. When cooked with good meat stock it is indeed delicious. Many people like to pour yogurt over their *bulgur* or their rice, for this is supposed to enhance the flavor. In fact, yogurt is very versatile, it is eaten with certain meat dishes, poured over horse beans cooked in olive oil or fried eggplants and squash. It can also be eaten as dessert with powdered sugar sprinkled on the surface.

In Kayseri, the ancient Cæsarea of the Romans, women prepare the famous *pastirma* (a highly spiced, garlic-flavored cured meat) which is considered a delicacy. Choice cuts of beef are selected, covered with a thick paste made of numerous spices and garlic and hung out in the sun for many weeks until "cooked." One can see the *pastirma* hanging from the gardens, the backyards and the balconies of most Kayseri homes.

But it is not all work in a Turkish home. While the city ladies spend their spare time going to a movie, a concert, sipping five o'clock tea or attending the horse races, women in small towns visit the neighbors. Neighbors are an institution and a boon to city as well as village communities. They are not merely people who happen to live next door, but real friends.



Young peasant girl in her gay kerchief

When a family moves into a new house, the neighbors call on them immediately and together they drink the cup of welcome. Let us say that Ali Efendi's wife has not a bit of sugar in the house and the stores are closed. What does she do? She covers her head and dashes out to her neighbor where she can borrow anything she needs. Neighbors are also glad to lend jewelry for prospective brides who have little money to spare. They share the family's joy, and when sorrow strikes, they are close at hand with advice and consolation. No newly arrived family ever feels lonely, the neighbors see to that. It is an unwritten law to be kind to one's neighbors. Grandmother has several herbs preserved in neat little bags which when boiled and drunk are supposed to be good for every ailment. When someone is sick in the neighborhood, she takes her herbs and goes over and brews them herself just the right way.

It is night now and the lights appear in the house windows. Ali Efendi

and his son have returned home from work. The table is set and on it are numerous homemade pickles, black olives, an earthenware bowl of yogurt and a plate stacked high with slices of bread, as no Turk would ever eat a meal without plenty of bread. Turkish bread comes in big round loaves, with a brown, hard and crisp crust. Poor people can make a meal of half a loaf of bread, white cheese or olives and perhaps a sliced tomato, the whole washed down by cold water from the public fountain.

Even though food is plentiful on Ali Efendi's table, bread is eaten generously and everyone sops it in the gravy. It is even eaten with the rice dish!

While Ali Efendi and the rest of the family use knives and forks, granny uses her fingers. That is the way she was brought up and she sees no reason for changing her habit because the younger people have adopted modern ways. When knives and forks were first introduced into Turkey, sometime in the 19th century, there was almost a revolution. The Turks said that food is sacred and must not be pricked with a fork. And who could know whether the silver was as clean as one's fingers? In the olden days there used to be special "washing maids" for the convenience of guests. One of them held the basin, the other poured the water from a pitcher and a third waited with a thick soft Turkish towel so that the guests could wash their hands and dry them before sitting down to eat. After the meal was over, the hand-washing ceremony was repeated. Even today Turkish people wash their hands before and after each meal, even though they may use knives and forks.

Conversation is limited at table. People are too busy appreciating the wonderful dishes prepared by granny. Ali Efendi never fails to praise her, saying:

"Allah is my witness, I have never tasted better *beurek* anywhere."

After the dessert is consumed and the last glass of water drunk, Ali Efendi pushes back his plate and says:

"Allah the Almighty be praised for His bounty."

With that he retires to the sitting room while the women prepare the after-dinner coffee and wash the dishes. A kettle of water is humming on the brazier, for water has to be heated for all purposes.

While Ali Efendi sips his coffee, sitting cross-legged on the sofa, there is a knock at the door and the neighbor's son arrives with his wife. He is an engineer who is visiting the old people back home and is married to a young girl from Istanbul. Together husband and wife walk into the sitting room where Ali Efendi, his son and another neighbor are chatting. The Istanbul girl, unlike the merchant's daughters, is used to showing her face to strange

men. How elegantly she is attired, in a silk dress, high-heeled shoes and a hat! Her lips are rouged and her face powdered. Ali Efendi receives them both with courtesy and soon one of his daughters knocks at the door and hands in a tray on which are cups of coffee for the guests. She does not come in, as there are strange men in the room, but hands the tray through to her brother.

A little later, the young bride goes to visit the women of the house, who are gathered in the upstairs sitting room. Although she is quite different from the women of the house, their faces betray no astonishment, nor are they ashamed of their cotton dresses and slippers. The Istanbul girl kisses the hand of granny and Ali Efendi's wife. She may be modern but she still is true to the upbringing of her childhood. And such wonderful tales she has for the women of this small town! One of her sisters has recently graduated with honors from the Istanbul Medical School and is now practicing in that city. A friend of hers has been appointed judge of the civil tribunal in Adana. And imagine, one of her mother's friends is thinking of running as deputy in the next elections!

By nine o'clock the guests have departed. Ali Efendi yawns, he is ready for bed. He gets up from his soft couch, dons his slippers and goes to his room. The women sit awhile sewing, knitting and talking. But soon they, too, are ready for bed. The doors are locked, the *mangal* covered with ashes, so no sparks will fly out and set the wooden house on fire, and the oil lamps extinguished. One by one the lights go off in the little town.

In the surrounding villages the candles have been out long ago. The farmer and his family are already sound asleep. The shepherd dreams on his mattress with his *kaval* lying close to him on the floor.

But in the cities the electric lights burn brightly. People eat late and all entertainment starts about nine o'clock. Motor cars and trolleys are carrying people to the movies and other places of amusement. From a modern night club the sound of jazz drifts until the wee hours of the morning.

And now we take reluctant leave of Ali Efendi and his family—may Allah give them peace and prosperity—and go back several centuries to delve into the history of the Turkish people, and see with our eyes how that ancient civilization is being transformed today under the republic.



## *From Empire to Republic*

A GROUP of horsemen, sinewy of limb, faces tanned by the sun, were advancing over the crest of the hill. They were warrior nomads leading a caravan of women, children and the aged in search of greener pastures. The leader of the band pulled in his reins abruptly and came to a halt. Down below in the valley he could see two armies clashing, the glint of their swords flashing through the cloud of dust raised by the prancing horses. Ertogrul Bey, for that was the name of the nomadic chieftain, could see at a glance that one side was being pressed with skill and was in danger of being annihilated. His soldier's heart was aroused. Here he was with some thousand horsemen, eager for a fray, fresh and rested, though they had travelled many long miles. Horseback riding was second nature to these men. They were, so to speak, born in the saddle and they died on horseback. He might be able to turn the tide of battle and rescue the weak from the

fate that awaited them. If he could not, it was Kismet. Ertogrul Bey consulted with his men and they, too, agreed to throw in their lot with the men struggling for their lives. To do otherwise would go against their honor. The men were willing to follow Ertogrul, for he was not only an able warrior but the wisest man of the tribe.

Spurring their horses to a gallop, Ertogrul and his nomads fell on the stronger of the two forces down in the valley. Caught between two onslaughts, the almost victorious side was routed and fled pell-mell, dragging their wounded behind them. It turned out to be that they were Tartar horsemen harassing the domain of the Seljuk Sultan Alaeddin, whose kingdom was situated in Asia Minor. Ertogrul Bey and his tribesmen had saved their Seljuk kinsmen from destruction.

Alaeddin, the Sultan of the Seljuk Turks, received Ertogrul and his nomad Turks in his capital, Konia, where beautiful mosques and palaces filled the nomads with awe and admiration. There were no cities like Konia in Central Asia, whence these men had travelled thousands of miles to reach Alaeddin's beautiful capital in Anatolia. The Sultan, as a reward, reaped them with honors and gave them a small fief in his domain. Ertogrul Bey decided to settle on this land where he had won his first important victory, a land which promised further advantages to him and his tribe.

In this fashion the ancestors of the Turks came into Anatolia in the 13th century and settled there under Ertogrul Bey, who was destined to form a new and powerful dynasty. Anatolia at that time was in the hands of the Byzantine Greeks, whose capital was called Constantinople and was situated on the European continent; and the Seljuk Turks, who had overrun Asia Minor in the 11th century. By the time Ertogrul and his tribesmen appeared, the Seljuk Empire had broken up into many dissident factions, each jealous of the other and constantly at war with one another or with the Byzantine Empire, which also was declining. Under the decadent rule of the emperors the once-powerful Byzantine or East Roman Empire, founded by Constantine the Great, had shrunk in size and power and was at the mercy of the Turks in Asia Minor and the Slavs who pressed from across Thrace and threatened the capital. A handful of Turks, real nomads from Central Asia, settled between two fast-decaying empires, an opportunity for these hardy Turks filled with energy and unspoiled by wealth and luxury of which they made the most.

Ertogrul's son Osman expanded his holdings and was proclaimed the first Sultan of the newly arrived Turks. It is from Osman that the Turks



An old mosque in Konya, the ancient capital of the Seljuk Turks

derived their name of Osmanli or Ottoman Turks, to distinguish them from their cousins the Seljuks, and it is by that name that the world was to know them until Kemal Atatürk abolished the Sultanate and created the new republic.

Many of the Seljuk princes rallied under Osman and soon a small nation took new roots in the soil of Anatolia. Not only Turks but even Greeks came to work for the Osmanlis, as many of them were tired of their inefficient and autocratic emperors and the endless intrigues and bloodshed of the imperial court at Constantinople.

At the death of Osman, his son Orkhan, feeling the strength of his country, led his hardy warriors across to Gallipoli where they succeeded in gaining a foothold in Europe. That was a fateful event both for the Turks and for Europe.

The Turkish soldiers who helped to conquer the vast Ottoman Empire were called Janissaries and at that time were the best-disciplined fighting

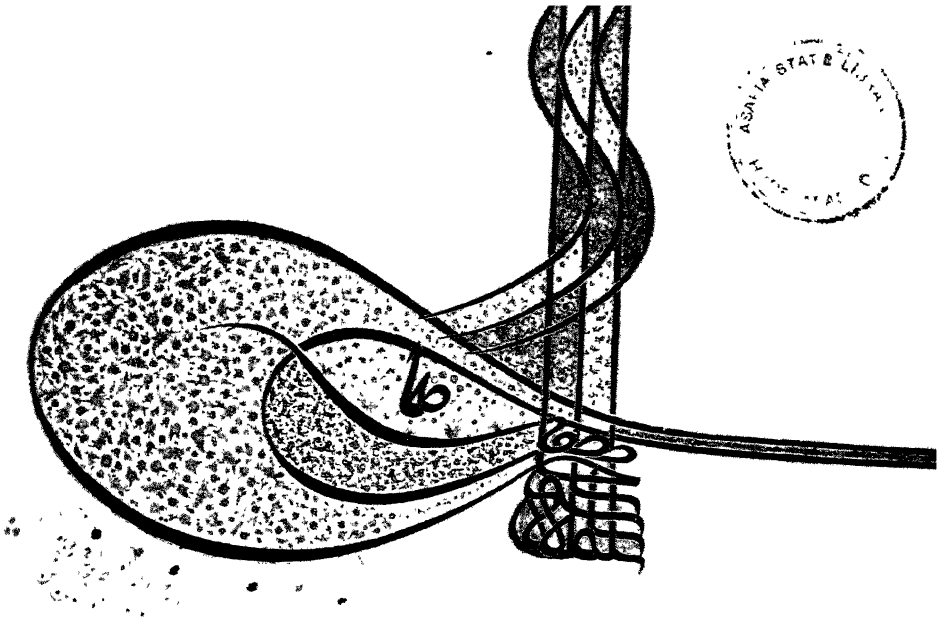


force in the world. They were first recruited as mere boys among the Christian subjects, accepted the Moslem religion and, in fact, became Turks. Later, children of well-to-do Turkish families were enrolled, as it was an honor to be admitted to the *Ojak* (hearthstone) of the Janissaries. The young boys were trained vigorously in the art of warfare, so that each soldier was physically strong as well as an expert in the arms of the day. With these shock troops, who knew no fear, the Sultans overran the Balkans and finally, in 1453, Sultan Mehmed the Second, called Fatih or the Conqueror, captured Constantinople and put an end to the Byzantine Empire. Less than two centuries after they had settled in Anatolia the Turks not only crushed the power of the East Roman Empire but had already built an empire of their own. As for the Seljuks, they had long ago been absorbed by the Osmanlis. Only one power remained in Asia Minor—the Ottoman Empire with its new capital, Constantinople, or Istanbul as the Turks called it. Successive Sultans pushed the empire's frontier westward and eastward until the Ottoman Empire reached the zenith of its power under Suleiman the Magnificent, whom the Turks call the Lawgiver. It included Hungary, Transylvania, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Mesopotamia and the Arab peninsula. The Sultans had also brought under their domain the Sudan and Egypt and had carried the Turkish flag as far as Ethiopia and Libya. Suleiman's Janissaries marched to the gates of Vienna and threatened that beautiful capital for a time. But Vienna did not fall and from that date the tide of Turks fell back.

The Ottoman Empire was also the center of culture, art and industry. While the Janissaries carried on the art of warfare, Turkish architects filled the cities with their masterpieces. Mosques of unusual beauty, some adorned with tiles, were erected, fountains and palaces and libraries were built and endowed by the Sultans or by prominent and wealthy individuals. The famous Kutahya factories turned out tiles whose exquisite textures and colorings rivalled those of Iran. Today one can admire those beautiful tiles at the Seraglio Palace, residence of the Sultans for many centuries, where the tiles of the immense halls and rooms reach to the ceiling. Our museums are filled with works of art of skilled craftsmanship, hand-written and illuminated books and Korans (Moslem Bible) which the artists of that time left as a legacy to the nation, rugs, pottery and brocades. The Moslem religion prohibits the copying of the human form, hence sculpturing and portrait painting were unknown and the artists devoted their talent to illustrating the books and covering the pages with exquisite geometric



Portrait of Sultan Ahmed the First. From a Seventeenth Century miniature



A Tughra (cypher or calligraphic emblem) of Suleiman the Magnificent. The design forms a stylized hand, with the name at the bottom

designs. Turkish artisans wove carpets, brocades and silks of unsurpassed beauty; while the swords of the warriors were wrought of the finest steel and inlaid with jewels and gold. There were also famous universities and centers of learning where men from all over the empire studied. These schools were built around the great mosques where the students lived and where also were hostels for travellers and the poor, who could seek refuge any time they wanted. Poets sang of beauty and religion while able statesmen guided the affairs of the empire. The Ottoman Empire was a unifying force and under it the Balkans and the Near East enjoyed a long period of peace and prosperity which they had not attained previously and unfortunately do not possess now.

Although the empire was ruled by the Sultan who was also "Caliph" or head of all the Moslems in the world, religious freedom was enjoyed by all the subjects even under the rule of absolute despots. The Christian and the Jewish minorities were not compelled to adopt the religion and culture of their conquerors and each distinct religious group was organized under its



Turkish swords, the hilts jewel-encrusted, the blades etched with Arabic inscriptions

own religious leader and enjoyed a great many privileges. The minorities worshipped in their churches and synagogues undisturbed at a time when bloody religious wars shook Europe and the Jews were persecuted throughout the world. They did not have to serve in the army, when a regular army was finally established, but could pay a certain sum of money and avoid military service. The minorities had their own schools where the teaching of Turkish was not obligatory and children who attended them knew nothing about the country they lived in. Thus these groups in the empire retained their own language, customs and clung to their identity. In the 19th century, when Turkey was weak, they began to plot with the western European powers and with Russia to obtain their independence. If your forefathers had followed the same system, there would not have been a United States of America but another Europe planted in the New World. In my childhood my family had a number of Greek friends who did not speak Turkish, although their ancestors had lived in our country for centuries. Now all minority schools are obliged to teach Turkish as well as Turk-

ish history and geography. All non-Turkish citizens now speak the language.

Another system which weakened the empire and was one of the main causes of its downfall, was the capitulations, or special privileges granted by the Sultans to the foreign powers. All foreigners in Turkey had their own laws and could not be tried in Turkish courts. They did not pay taxes and all the goods imported into the country from abroad were exempt from customs duty. The capitulations encouraged the European powers and the minorities to wring concessions which finally reduced Turkey to a mere colony of Europe.

After the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire began to decline. The rise of Russia and the Austrian Empire was threatening the power of the Osmanlis. Unfortunately for us, men of little ability were at the helm. Jealousies and corruptions set in. The Janissaries became unruly, set up a Sultan only to depose him at will until Mahmoud the Second, in the 19th century, crushed them effectively and disbanded the corps. The Moslem clergy were against all reforms that might have saved the empire and sided with the ignorant to keep the country backward. On the other hand the western world was making enormous strides in political and social reforms, industry and the sciences. The west was embarked on the great industrial age that was to transform the world. The cannon replaced the sword, the machine dethroned the hand loom, but the Turks clung to their old-fashioned ways. Although western reforms were finally introduced into the new army created by Mahmoud the Second, the west was far superior in the art of warfare and the Turks could no longer rely on their military prowess to save them from calamity. Everywhere they were on the defensive, and one by one the countries won by their ancestors cut loose from the empire and rose as independent nations.

There were several attempts at westernization, but none succeeded to check the downfall of the Ottoman Empire. They were based on the concept of patching holes in the gap and clinging to the unwieldy empire which was fast disintegrating, and thus proved ineffectual. The most important period of reform was in the middle of the 19th century, when a new constitutional government was established under a liberal Sultan. That was when my grandfather, Namik Kemal (no relation to Kemal Ataturk or Mustapha Kemal, the two names by which our first president is known) was a young man filled with ideas of reform and liberty. A great lover of his country, Namik Kemal's whole life was devoted to freeing his people and instilling in them love of country and of liberty. Namik Kemal had been brought up

by a liberal father who had told him stories of Turkish history and the tyranny of the Sultans. Even as a child Namik Kemal brooded over the unhappy fate of his country, and often he would climb to the roof and look down upon the houses, dimly lighted by candle light, and wonder how many children lived in sorrow because their fathers had been exiled by the Sultan. As a young man he joined the liberal party and soon, with his patriotic poems and his articles, won a prominent place as a writer and a true patriot. His writings not only inspired the people of his day but generations to come as well.

One of Namik Kemal's plays, "*Vatan*" or "Fatherland" was produced in Istanbul and the public was so enthusiastic that they clamored for the author and carried him on their shoulders throughout the streets of the city. Alas for Namik Kemal, the tyrant Abdul Hamid had replaced the liberal Sultan and Hamid was afraid of the growing popularity and the influence that the poet had over the people. He was arrested and sent into exile by the Sultan's police. Kemal spent a great deal of his life away from his country, but he did not cease to write and work for liberty until his death on the island of Chios at the age of forty-nine. The Sultan was so terrified of this great patriot that he forbade his burial in the city of Istanbul for fear of public demonstrations. Namik Kemal and the patriots of his day paved the way for the reforms undertaken by the republic years later.

After a series of disastrous wars, the Russo-Turkish in 1876 and the

An inscription from the Koran, used as a wall hanging



Balkan Wars in 1912—the Turks lost all of their western empire except a narrow strip of land in Thrace. They had also been forced to give up their numerous holdings in Africa and retained only the Near East, where the Arabs were clamoring for independence.

It was under these conditions that we entered World War I in 1914, on the side of the Germans. It was fear of our traditional enemy, Russia, and the fact that Great Britain and France in secret deals had promised Istanbul to the Russians provided they fought against Germany, that threw the Turks into the German camp. After four years of bitter warfare, Turkey was finally defeated and the victorious powers occupied Istanbul in 1918. An armistice was signed and Turkey was shorn of her possessions in the Near East and her army disbanded. Worse was awaiting the country, for it was soon evident that the victorious Allies were determined to partition the country among themselves and put an end to “The Sick Man of Europe.” But it was not destined that Turkey should die in this ignominious fashion, and the birth of the new Turkey came about by a rebirth of vigor in the Turkish nation led and inspired by Kemal Atatürk, a great general and leader.

He was born Mustapha, the son of a minor government official and an illiterate peasant mother. As there were no family names in Turkey at that time, he was called simply Mustapha and when he grew up he would have been addressed as Mustapha Bey, or Mr. Mustapha, just as a boy named John might be called Mr. John.

Very little is known about Mustapha’s father, who died while the boy was still very young. His mother, though uneducated, was a strong woman, forceful, upright in character and deeply religious. It is from his peasant mother than young Mustapha inherited the characteristics that were to make him famous.

The boy was weak in body and moody, so his mother, who was very poor after the death of her husband, took him to the farm of a brother where she thought he would gain in strength. On his uncle’s farm, young Mustapha tended the sheep and spent long hours stretched on the grass under the warm sun. He grew stronger and bigger but he never ceased dreaming, wondering and thinking of the future. He did not want to grow up to be an ignorant farmer like his uncle; he wanted to be educated, to become a great soldier, a gentleman whom people would respect. A soldier he would be, although his mother was against a military career for her son and money was scarce. He finally persuaded his mother to leave his uncle’s



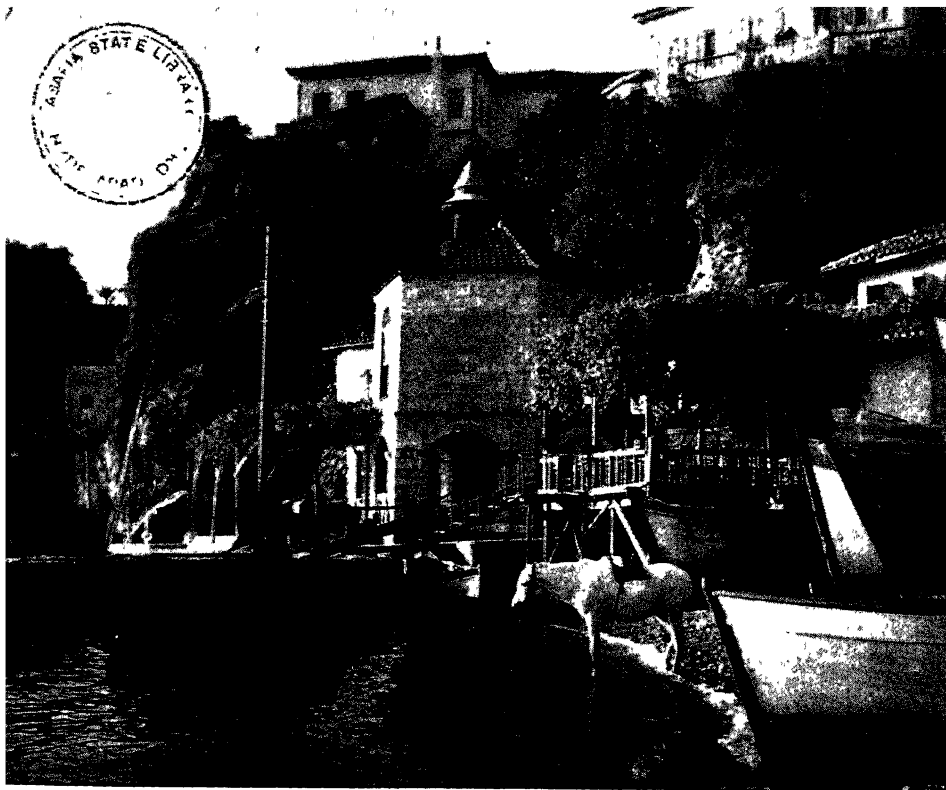
A group of Turkish officers wearing the fez Kemal Ataturk is the young officer seated at the far right in the first row

farm and return to Salonika, where he succeeded in enrolling in a military school.

✕ To distinguish the boy from the other Mustaphas in the school, one of his teachers added the name of Kemal and henceforth he was known as Mustapha Kemal. In choosing the name Kemal, the teacher had in mind the great Turkish poet and patriot, Namik Kemal, whose works were being read avidly by all the educated people.

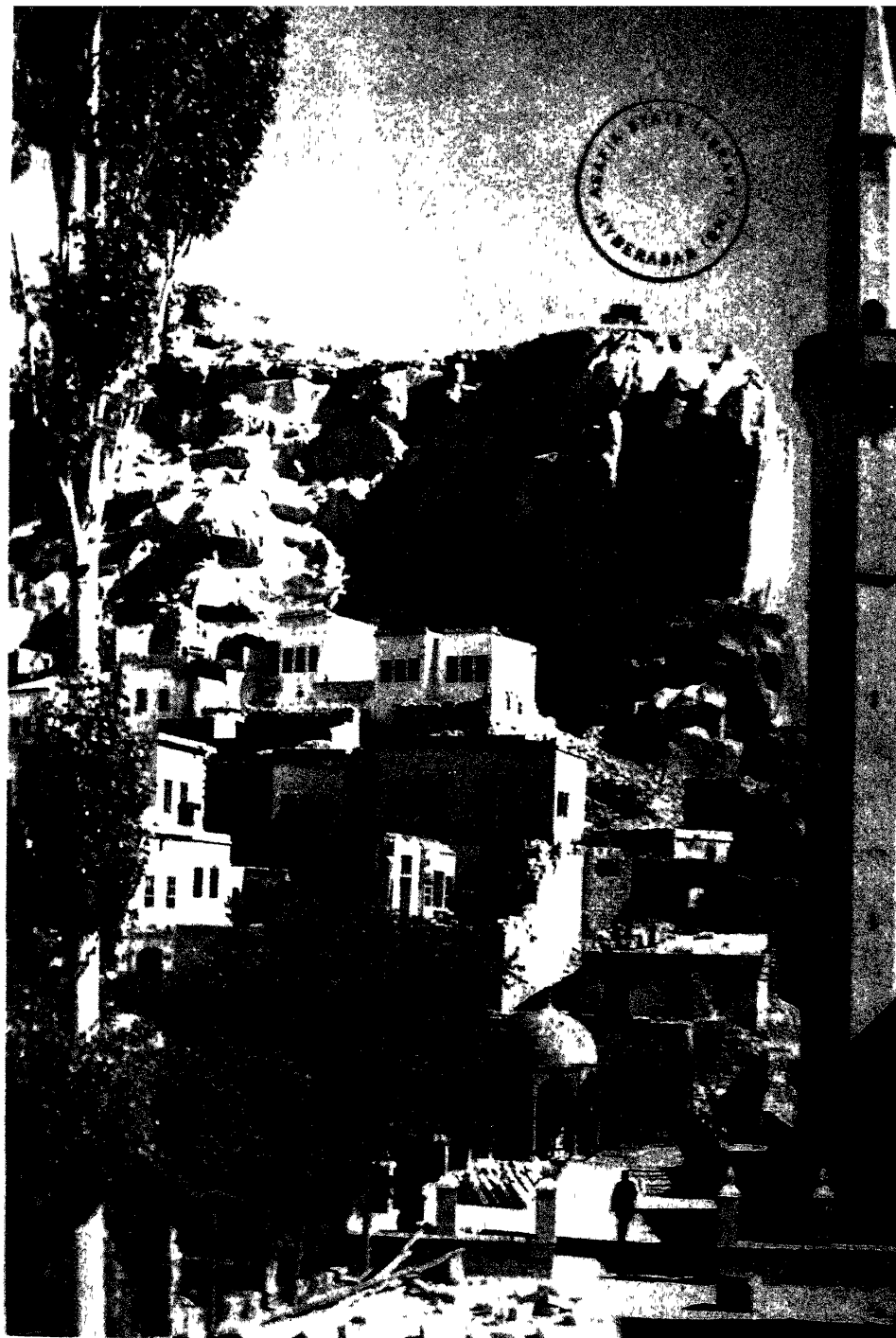
It was as Mustapha Kemal that the young man sailed for Istanbul and there entered the Military Academy, the Turkish equivalent of West Point. He soon came into contact with other revolutionary and liberty-loving cadets, eager to achieve political freedom and curb the power of the tyrant, Sultan Abdul Hamid. Hidden under his mattress were works of Namik Kemal and the French philosophers, all of which were forbidden to be read in Turkish schools, but which the future revolutionary leader read in secret at night by candle light. He joined a secret revolutionary movement in the Academy and spent some weeks in prison for his political activities.





An Anatolian village on the shores of the Black Sea

Mustapha Kemal graduated from the Academy with honors and was sent to Damascus, a virtual exile. Sultan Abdul Hamid had a way of sending the most promising young men away from Istanbul to remote corners of the empire, where he thought they could do him no harm. Throughout his life as a young officer, Mustapha Kemal brooded over the misfortune of his country, the tyranny of the Sultans, and realized that drastic changes were needed to save, not the empire, which he thought doomed, but the country itself. He took part in the revolution of 1908, which deposed Abdul Hamid and established once more a constitutional government. But Mustapha Kemal soon realized that the men who had assumed power under the new Sultan, a mere puppet in their hands, were incompetent and many of them were interested only in their own power. He criticized the government bitterly and as a consequence he was not very popular. He spent most of his



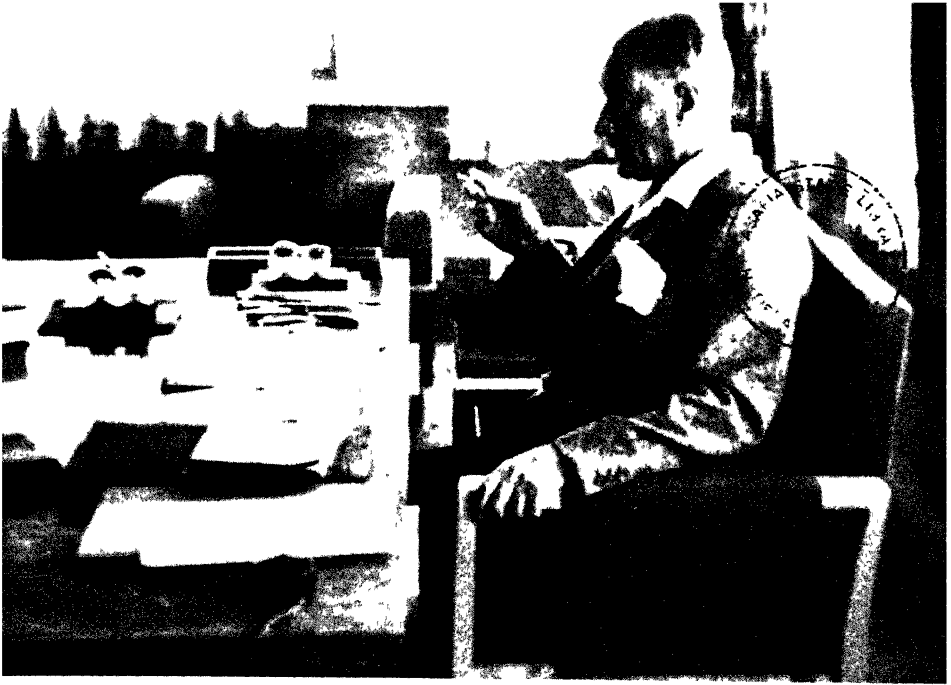
Urgup, an Anatolian village at the foothill of a great cone

young manhood outside of Istanbul in numerous army posts and fought several times for his country.

Mustapha Kemal was opposed to the entry of Turkey into the First World War and thought the country should remain neutral as long as it could. He also dared to express the opinion that Germany in the end would be defeated. The men in power laughed at him and paid no attention to his counsel. Once Turkey found herself enmeshed in warfare, Mustapha Kemal kept his opinion to himself and served his country well. It was he who organized the brilliant Dardanelles campaign where, with inadequate equipment and a small army, he successfully defended the straits, saving Istanbul and the country for a time. This feat endeared him to the people and gradually they were whispering his name with admiration and love. Mustapha Kemal received an ovation when he returned to Istanbul after the withdrawal of the Allied naval units and their expeditionary forces. The Minister of War grew jealous and sent him to the crumbling Erzerum front where the Turks were fighting against the Russians. When that front collapsed with the Bolshevik revolution, Kemal was sent to the Near East but he arrived too late to be of much use. Already the Turkish armies were disintegrating, due to lack of supplies and food and the superior British force before which they were giving ground rapidly. When Turkey finally sued for an armistice, Mustapha Kemal had just completed the retreat of Turkish forces in Syria.

He returned to Istanbul. There he found the victorious powers in control and a weak Sultan resigned to any fate which the conquerors might deem fit to impose so long as they kept him in power. Mustapha Kemal paced the floor of the small house he had rented, and pondered over his next move. Plans began to take shape in his mind. The Allies must be resisted at all cost or else Turkey would cease to exist as an independent nation. He pleaded with the Sultan and his government but his efforts were of no avail. He gave up in disgust and decided to leave Istanbul, where the presence of occupation forces galled him. He finally obtained the post of Inspector General of the armies in Anatolia and in May 1919 he landed at Samsun, a port on the Black Sea, charged with the duty of demobilizing the remnants of the Turkish army.

A few days before Mustapha Kemal landed at Samsun, a well-equipped and large Greek army had landed at Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey's second largest city and one of her best ports. The Greeks were backed by the British and French fleets, supposedly to police the region but really to annex it to



An informal picture of Kemal Atatürk taken at his desk

Greece. There was no doubt now in the minds of the Turkish people that the Allies were determined to wipe them out and divide the country among themselves. The landing of the Greeks in Izmir aroused the public, and mass demonstrations were held in Istanbul and elsewhere.

Soon fighting broke out between the Greek soldiers and irregular bands of Turkish patriots. The Anatolian peasants realized that their homeland, their very villages and farms were in danger, and many of them were burned and destroyed as the Greeks penetrated farther inland. The only hope of salvation lay in fighting the enemy. The long-suffering Anatolian peasants heeded the call of Mustapha Kemal, who was urging them to defend their homeland, and rallied under his banner. Isolated groups were organized hastily with the aim of harassing the enemy until a regular army could be trained and equipped. Meanwhile, Mustapha Kemal gave up his military post and rank and as a private citizen started to organize the resistance movement in Anatolia. The Sultan's government in Istanbul, alarmed at

his activities, recalled him but he refused to return to the capital. And now men and women from all over the country were gathering about Kemal. Many prominent Turkish military and civilian leaders, disguised as peasants, fled the city secretly at night before the very eyes of the occupational forces and the Sultan's police, to join Kemal's National Force, as the resistance movement called itself.

Any doubt that the Turks still had about their fate was dispelled when the victorious powers imposed the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres. It was signed by the Sultan's representatives, mere tools in Allied hands, on the 10th of August, 1920, but Kemal and his National Force rejected the treaty. To accept it would have meant annihilation. With the Treaty of Sèvres the Arab states in the Near East were detached from Turkey, to which no one had any objection. Being defeated, we knew that we could not cling to our empire any more. But it was not only the empire but the country itself that was being torn to pieces. Anatolia, the homeland of the Turks for centuries, was cut up and parcelled out among the British, French, Italians and the Greeks. The Dardanelles was to be demilitarized and placed under an Allied commission while Istanbul was to be left under the Sultan, a broken insignificant city. A strip of land between Ankara and the Black Sea was left to us, the least fertile and the poorest. In reality Turkey was to become a colony of the western powers. The signing of the Treaty of Sèvres did more than anything else to increase national resistance. Already Mustapha Kemal had broken with the Istanbul government and he had been condemned to death in absentia.

In the meantime Mustapha Kemal had moved into Ankara, where the Grand National Assembly met to direct the course of the war. There were two governments, one the defunct one under the Sultan in Istanbul, the other in Ankara representing the will of the people. It took a long time for the Nationalist government to train and equip a regular army. All the while the Greeks were advancing in Asia Minor and at one time even threatened Ankara.

Fortunately for Turkey, the one-time Allied nations were preoccupied with important matters and soon started to quarrel among themselves. France, at odds with Great Britain, decided to withdraw her forces from the zone of occupation given to her and recognized the government of Kemal in Ankara. Soviet Russia was the first country to recognize the new régime and to give it moral support, for the main reason that she did not want Turkey to pass under the domination of Great Britain or any other country,



These odd-shaped cones formed in Urgup and surrounding districts are the work of volcano, river and wind

and to have the capitalist countries established so close to her frontiers.

The War of Independence or the Turko-Greek War is an epic of which the Turks can be truly proud. Alone and friendless, they stood against the world. With no army and hardly any money, they defied the victorious nations who had just crushed the mighty power of Germany. The people had lived through four years of harrowing war; they had known hunger and defeat and humiliation. Istanbul, their capital since 1453, was occupied by enemy forces for the first time in five centuries. And yet the Turks fought on three more years, stubbornly and bitterly, to regain their lost independence. Thousands of young men died to defend the homeland. Even women and children took part in the struggle. Farms had to be tilled despite the destruction of war and the menace of advancing Greek armies.

On the 26th of August, 1922, the decisive battle of the war was fought and the Greeks completely crushed, while their commander-in-chief was taken a prisoner. The Greeks, realizing that they had lost the war, fled in haste before the advancing forces led by Mustapha Kemal, who had been

given the title of "Gazi" (The Victorious One) by the Grand National Assembly. On September 9th the Turkish troops entered Izmir in triumph as the last Greek soldiers embarked on the waiting ships and Anatolia was freed at last.

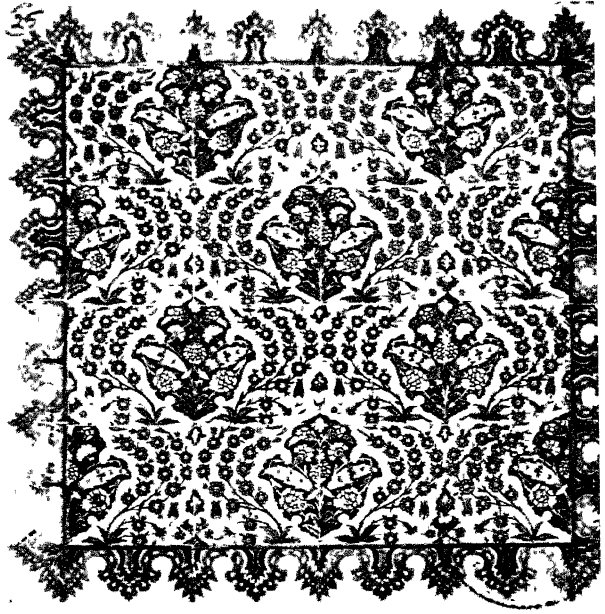
The plans for these campaigns were drawn by Mustapha Kemal, Ismet Inonu, his right-hand man and now President of the republic, and their General Staff. But it was the military genius and the untiring efforts of Mustapha Kemal that enabled the small Turkish army to overcome the Greeks.

On July 23, 1923, the Allies and the Nationalist government signed the Treaty of Lausanne. The Gazi had sent his able lieutenant, Ismet Inonu, to represent the country and, after much haggling and many bitter words, the Allies gave in and recognized the new Turkey and the frontiers demanded by Kemal Ataturk. Allied forces were to evacuate Istanbul, Turkish lands to be turned over to the Turks and the capitulations were to be abolished. There was also to be an exchange of population between the Greeks who lived in Turkey and the Turks in Greece.

The Sultan had fled on an English battleship long before the Treaty of Lausanne was signed. On October 29, 1923, the Sultanate was abolished and Turkey was created a republic, with Ankara as the new capital. The Grand National Assembly elected Mustapha Kemal as the first president of the new Turkey.

At last Mustapha Kemal's dream had come true. He had not only saved his country, establishing its rightful frontiers, but had forced the world to recognize him and the right of the Turks to a free life. After his triumphal entry in Izmir, Mustapha declared, "Our work is not finished; on the contrary it now begins." He was determined to carry out the program of reforms which had been formulating for years in his mind. It was not enough to save the country; he had to build it on a strong foundation, to break with the past and build a new and modern Turkey who would take her place among the free and civilized nations of the world.

After seven years of warfare, Turkey rose stronger than she had been for years, no longer a declining empire but a small united country, satisfied with her size and only eager to strengthen herself internally and win the friendship of the nations near and far. She was destined to win shortly the admiration of the world by her quick recovery and her rapid change from a medieval state to a modern country.-



## *A Nation Goes to School*

*I*MAGINE turning a whole country into a vast school where new ways of living and dressing, new methods of learning and thinking are taught at a speed to which the Turkish people were not accustomed! Suppose it had happened in this country and your government had decided that the old American way was a hindrance to your growth and had asked you to change your headgear, your calendar and even your alphabet! You will answer immediately that the government would do nothing of the sort and perhaps add, hotly, that the government has no right to interfere in these matters. But it happened in Turkey and people there reacted quite differently. The majority of the Turks wanted these reforms and knew they were essential to strengthen the country. Of course there were some who objected strongly, not that they questioned the government's right to do as it would, but they were ignorant and refused to accept the ways of the West,



so different from those they had known for centuries. To them, any reform that came from the west was a direct attack upon the Moslem religion.

Perhaps, to realize the importance of this astonishing revolution that has taken place in my country during the past twenty-four years, I should give you, in brief, a picture of the country before the foundation of the new republic. Although the Turks lived in the 20th century and were part of Europe, holding a strip of land on that continent, and had accepted many European customs and a semblance of European culture, they were as a whole backward, with institutions dating from the Middle Ages. The government was autocratic and people did not enjoy political freedom. They were used to being led by strong men and could not imagine that the will of the people could be supreme. Turkish laws, for the most part, were based on the Koran and were not adequate for a modern state. Women were secluded, had limited education and were barred from public life. Education, when it comes to that, was a luxury and about 85 per cent of the people could neither read nor write. The peasants tilled the soil with old implements. They did not know modern agricultural methods and, although Turkey is mainly an agricultural country, she did not produce enough food to feed her people. The ox team and the donkey tried to compete with modern machinery. We did not have the factories that fill your cities and towns, and what we needed we bought from other countries at a great cost. Most of our public utilities, our railroads and some of our mines were owned and exploited by foreigners who became rich at our expense while our national debt grew.

One of the things which amazed me in the United States was the many highways that reach even your remotest villages. In Turkey there were very few good roads and consequently the villages were cut off from each other. Religion not only gave us our laws but also interfered with our daily life and our education. And let us admit, even though the truth hurts, that we as a whole left everything in the hands of Allah. If the Turk lost his money or his job or misfortune struck him, he said, "It is Kismet (Fate)," and bowed before a power higher than his own. Gradually we had learned to resign ourselves and accept evil because we thought that it was ordained from above and could not be changed. This inertia and lack of initiative kept the Turkish people backward and prevented them from working as hard as you do in this country. If one is thankful for a mere crust of bread because that is Kismet, one does not work very hard to secure a whole loaf. Money in itself did not mean much to us; we never slaved all our lives to amass a fortune. It was even considered a disgrace for a well-born Turk to



Harvesting the old fashioned way with oxen instead of tractors

go into business, and most of our merchants, traders and businessmen were drawn from the minorities who lived among us and who grew rich. A Turk was either a soldier, a government official or a follower of the liberal arts.

On the other hand, our lives did not lack color, charm and beauty, and our people were true to the principles of honesty, fear of Allah, kindness to one another and to strangers. And we might have managed to get along with our ox teams, our Kismet and our quaint ways if we had lived on an isolated planet.

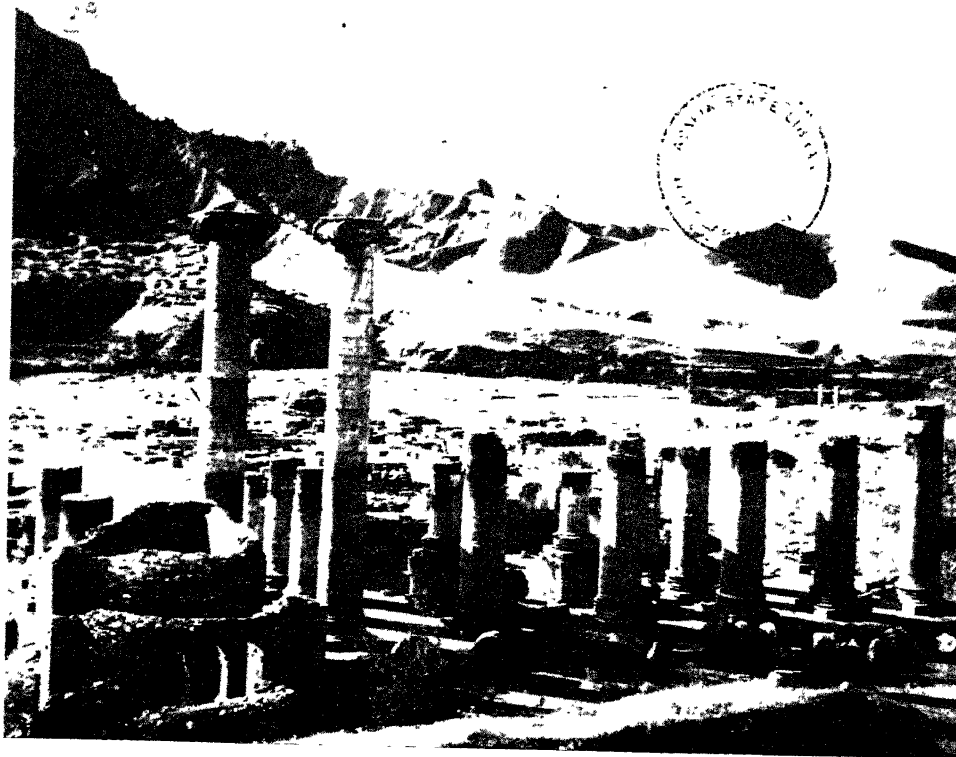
But all about us were countries different from ours, countries far advanced in industry, in modern scientific methods, rich through trade and agriculture and the natural resources they had learned to pluck from the soil. They were also aggressive countries with powerful armies and navies spreading their tentacles over the backward countries of the world. The First World War made it plain to us that if we wanted to survive we had to change, if we wanted to live on an equal footing with the countries of Europe, we had to adopt Western methods and put our house in order. This truth we learned the hard way, after our country was occupied and we as a nation almost wiped out of existence. There was no choice left to us, we simply had to



Ancient Hittite graveyards near Fethiye supposed to have been built as early as 1000 B.C

undergo a complete transformation and do it in a hurry. The isolated few who could not learn the lesson of history and wanted to cling to the old order had to be carried along by the majority.

This brief glimpse into our past might help a stranger to understand why the Turkish people welcomed the many reforms brought about by the republic. It took Europe several centuries to emerge from the medieval stage to a modern one. We had no time for evolution to take its course and decided to skip the centuries in a hurry, to catch up with our neighbors. The effort had to be directed and organized by the government so the transition could be carried out smoothly and efficiently. Turkey in 1923 was weak, two bloody wars had shaken and ruined her, and all about us were powerful nations watching greedily. We knew that if this time we failed again, we would not be given another chance. We set about to modernize our old institutions, abolished some, which like the appendix were useless and could



The remains of Cybele Temple on Sardis, a reminder of the Greek civilization that flourished in Asia Minor

become dangerous, and created new ones. And thus it came about that a nation had to go to school in the 20th century to learn the intricate ways of the West.

No other Oriental country has changed as thoroughly as Turkey has done. What about Japan? It is true that Japan started on the road of modernization long before we did and established an efficient western system and overhauled her war machine until it became a formidable menace in the Pacific. And yet we know that the Japanese people are far from being completely westernized and they still retain many of their ancient customs, some of which definitely belong to the dark ages. The difference between the Japanese and the western world was vast to begin with and remained so despite the fact that Japan adopted western technique. The Turks, on the other hand, were much nearer Occidental civilization and their revolution went deeper, so deep, in fact, that it affected every phase of Turkish life.

The first lesson to be learned was that of self-government, much harder to master than you in America can imagine. As we saw, the Sultanate was abolished and a republic created to take its place. A new constitution was drawn up and general suffrage granted to all men who had completed their eighteenth birthday. Women received the vote later. The Grand National Assembly, which corresponds to your Congress, is composed of one house, as we have no Senate, and the deputies are elected by popular vote for a period of four years and can be reelected. The president, on the other hand, is elected for four years by the Grand National Assembly and not by popular vote as he is in the United States. The president can be reelected indefinitely; there is no law or precedent that curbs his tenure of office. Most of the deputies in the Assembly belong to the People's Party, the one political party which existed until 1945. A second party has finally been organized because the Turkish people now realize that the two-party system is essential in a real democracy.

Turkey's one-party system has been criticized severely and because of it we have been called a totalitarian country. Don't forget that when you here in America established your republic the people were not only educated but also had had a long period of training in political freedom. It was much easier for you to overthrow the rule of the King of England and establish a real democracy than it was for us in Turkey to abolish the power of the Sultan. The Turks had no conception of self-government, and the mere granting of the vote did not teach them how to use it wisely and successfully. In this respect, until we acquired education and political knowledge, we had to be guided.

✓Mustapha Kemal, our first president, was not a dictator, as he has often been called, although he had more power than most presidents. He had not led the nation to victory for his own glory or the perpetuation of his own name. After the successful termination of the Turko-Greek war, he might have declared himself Sultan and founded a new dynasty as Napoleon schemed until he became Emperor of France. Many people throughout the world expected this move and whispered privately that the Turk, like the leopard, would never change his spots. But Mustapha Kemal resigned from the army, of which he was supreme commander, and as a civilian became president of Turkey and worked harder than any other man to establish a republican form of government. Kemal believed in the rights of men, he believed that all men are equal before the law and that the state is the servant of the people and not its master. But he also realized that self-government



View of Edirne, the principal city in European Turkey

8

could not be acquired overnight; it had to come gradually. In his lifetime, he attempted to create a second party in opposition to his own and asked one of his best friends to head the newly formed party. All the reactionaries gathered about it, thinking that through the opposition they could restore the old order and stop the revolution they did not like. So much confusion and friction came to life that the young republic was threatened for a time and the second party shelved reluctantly. ✓

Today another attempt has been made and a second party, the Democratic Party headed by Celal Bayar, an ex-premier and a prominent leader, has been founded in opposition to the Republican People's Party. The new party has gained many followers especially in the large cities such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. On July 21, 1946, a general election was held. The Democrats did not have time enough to organize thoroughly. Nevertheless, they won 66 seats in the Grand National Assembly while the incumbent Republican Party captured 395.

For the first time since the Republic was founded twenty-three years ago,



The *Zeybeks* of Aydın wear this handsome costume. They are famed as dancers and their names appear often in Turkish folk lore



A well-to-do peasant from the district around Konya



the Turks were free to vote as they willed and could choose the deputies they wanted instead of voting for the candidates carefully selected by the People's Party.

There are many people who charge that the elections were unfair and that the Republicans used pressure to have their candidates elected. The Democrats held a mass meeting in protest of the elections that went against them. Even if these charges are true, the important fact remains that the Turkish people are now awakened to their rights. The government has been forced to recognize the powerful voice of the opposition. Newspapers are enjoying unprecedented freedom of criticism. Turkey in this respect is moving closer to a real democracy as it exists in the United States and Great Britain.

The Turks did not only lack political freedom under the Sultans but they could not even decide what to put on their heads! If you had come to Turkey before the foundation of the republic, you would have seen all the men and the boys wearing the red fez with a black tassel in the back. Foreigners used to rhapsodize over our fezzes and think them romantic and colorful. However that may be, no Turk could appear in public without this peculiar headdress and if anyone had been bold enough to wear a hat he would have been dragged to the nearest police station. The hat was considered the symbol of Christianity and utterly unfit to grace good Moslem heads. The wearing of the hat was considered sinful and was prohibited severely. This attitude was fostered and encouraged by many of our *hodjas* who looked at all the ways of the West as the very work of Satan.

What is more, a Turk could never get rid of his fez. In the past, the highest form of respect was to keep one's head covered. When a Moslem goes to the mosque to pray he never bares his head as a Christian does when he enters a church. From the moment a Turk left his house to the time he returned to it at night, he never took off his fez. He wore it while he worked, ate, prayed, when he went to a theater, even when he went visiting. Only at night, in the midst of his family, could a Turk take off his fez and, of course, when he went to bed.

The Turks were far from suspecting that the fez, which was almost part of their make-up, was threatened. But Mustapha Kemal had decided that the best way to usher in his program of modernization was by breaking up prejudice. The government had to tread cautiously, as it was felt that many people would highly resent the adoption of the hat. In order to prepare the people, Mustapha Kemal and a group of deputies undertook to tour the

country. They landed at Kastamonu, a conservative town in Anatolia, all wearing hats. The peasants of Kastamonu could hardly believe their eyes. Here was their hero, their Gazi, as the people affectionately called their president, wearing the hated hat! It was August, 1925, just about two years since the foundation of the Republic, and people had not yet realized that they were destined to live through one of the most amazing and far-reaching revolutions of all times. Whatever the good peasants thought, they said nothing and gathered about the Gazi, who proceeded to talk to them. It was not a difficult speech full of flowery phrases but a simple talk which these men could understand. He told them that the fez was not even Turkish in origin but had been borrowed from the Greeks. He went on to explain that the headgear did not make the man and could never influence his religion. He abused the fez as unhygienic and ugly and fit only for backward people. Turkey, the Gazi went on warmly, had decided to change her ways, to become modern and take her place among the civilized people of the world. But how would the West accept us if we persisted in wearing that ridiculous headgear, symbol of a degrading past?

The talk lasted quite a while and though the Gazi remained cool, as he was protected from the hot summer's sun by the broad brim of his hat, the audience with their visorless fezzes broiled uncomfortably. Perhaps, they admitted inwardly, as they mopped their hot brows, the great man was right, and since he went about with his new hat and the lightning of Allah did not strike him, it might be that the *hodjas* had been wrong.

The Gazi and his new hat appeared in many Anatolian towns and villages, and everywhere he went the people gathered about him and listened to what he had to say. There was no doubt that the hat was very becoming to him and he knew how to wear it well. Some of the young people were quite won over by the idea despite the grumblings of their elders.

It might seem strange that such careful preparations had to be made to adopt the hat in Turkey. People all over Europe fought just as hard against the innovations of their times as the Turks did, only this happened so long ago that we have forgotten about it. While the younger generation of Turks in the cities, the educated men, were waiting for a word to discard their fezzes, there were a great many people to whom the hat was a religious issue and therefore they had to be won over slowly and with a great deal of effort.

It soon became clear to us that important events were in store for the country. The Gazi had laid his plans and he had talked about them with

members of the government. He was now ready to translate them into action. On November 25, 1925, the Grand National Assembly forbade the wearing of the fez or any form of headdress without a visor, and anyone breaking the law could be arrested and imprisoned.

I shall never forget the days that preceded the passing of the hat law. Istanbul was in an uproar. All the men rushed out to buy hats for themselves, and in a few hours the stock melted away and frantic merchants had to cable orders for more all over Europe in order to meet this unprecedented demand. Those who could not secure them or who could not afford them asked their wives to sew them caps with visors. And there were many, too, who preferred a homemade contraption to a hat with a broad brim, as less objectionable. For days people talked of nothing else, and even in a city as modern as Istanbul there were many men who did not want to part from their fezzes.

When the hat law finally went into effect, the sea of red fezzes vanished from sight forever. What an odd assortment of headgear could be found in Turkey during those first years the change was made! Homemade caps, of all sizes, shapes and colors, bowlers, felt hats and high hats. A youthful street cleaner, more as a joke, was seen strutting the streets of Istanbul wearing a woman's large straw hat decorated with flowers. And how awkwardly our

The hills around Tortum close to the eastern border of Turkey



men wore their hats and handled them in public—many of them lifting them by the brim! When friend met friend in the street there was a gay burst of laughter, for there was no doubt that the hat had changed the Turkish face. Many a young man was seen studying his profile in the store windows and spending a few minutes before the mirror to place his new hat at a becoming angle.

In some sections of the country opposition to the hat assumed serious proportions, for the Kurds, incited by the *hodjas*, rose in rebellion and had to be quelled by force. *They were ranged.*

The hat also raised a perplexing question for those who prayed regularly five times a day. How was a man supposed to pray in the mosque with his hat on when he had to bow and touch his forehead to the ground? The brim would get in the way. In vain did Turkish leaders argue that a man could pray with his head uncovered! The old peasants knew better. They finally found a way. Each man carried in his pocket a skull-cap which he wore in the mosque after carefully removing his hat. Thus he could still pray with his head covered and Allah would not be offended.

If Turkey had been fortunate enough to have an army of Gallup poll experts going about the country, pencil behind the ear and fingers on the nation's pulse, it would have transpired that more Turkish men caught

Typical village on the Black Sea with Turkish fishing boats



colds during the first six months the hat law went into effect than ever before. For the first time Turkish men bared their heads when they saluted one another in the street. The Turks love ceremony and a mere "hello" would never satisfy them. In the past, the Turkish salutation had been the *temenlah*, a feat worthy of a ballet master. Slowly and carefully a man bent down from the waist and at the same time brought the right arm almost to the ground. Then he gradually straightened his body, bringing the right hand upward until it touched the forehead. Another form of salutation, especially among the Anatolian people, was to lay the right hand over the heart. But all these numerous forms of greeting did not require uncovering the head, hence the increase of sniffles and sneezes when the hat was adopted.

Today the hat is accepted without question. In fact, the Turkish man has forgotten that he ever wore the outlandish and impractical headdress of the past. I am sure that many a Turkish man today would chuckle with mirth if he ever saw an American Shriner in his gorgeous fez, forgetting that twenty years ago a Turk could wear nothing else.

† Once the Turk donned the western hat, it was easier for him to accept changes no less drastic. One by one, the old calendar, the old way of telling time, and the weekly rest day were changed. The Turks, being Moslems, did not count the years dating from the birth of Christ as the Christian calendar does, but from the Hegira, the flight of the prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina where he finally succeeded in establishing the Moslem religion. Hence, while the western world was in the 20th century, we in Turkey were still in the 14th, for Mohammed was born in the year 570 and the Hegira took place in 622. Although many people used the western calendar, it was not officially accepted until the republic. The adoption of the western calendar hardly caused a ripple.

On the other hand, the change of the rest day from Friday to Sunday aroused criticism from the old-school Turks. They saw in it another sign that the government was drawing away from the Moslem tradition, and deemed it a blow against religion. In the past the Moslems closed shop on Friday, the Jews on Saturday and the Christians on Sunday, so we had three days of rest every week. The republic decided that there were not enough working days left and declared Sunday the official day of rest despite the objection of the few.

One of the most important reforms adopted by the new government had to do with the laws of the country. In 1926 a new Civil Code based on that of Switzerland, a new Penal Code based on that of Italy, and a new Com-



Turkish peasant girl. Golden coins of the Ottoman Empire are used as necklaces bracelets and earrings by Anatolian women

mercial Code modelled after that of many nations, were adopted. Turkish laws up to that time had been mainly drawn from the Koran; they were religious laws and the judges were called *cadis* and wore turbans like our *hodjas*. That these laws were adequate and excellent some hundreds of years ago cannot be denied, for the Turks prize justice highly. A story is told about Sultan Mehmed the Second, the conqueror of Istanbul, who was hailed before the court by a simple citizen and condemned by the *cadi* for a minor offense. The Sultan later told the judge that he would have been punished if he had shown the least partiality, which indicates that in the 15th century the Sultans did not consider themselves above the law.

But times had changed since the Conqueror lived and few judicial reforms had been adopted until the creation of the republic. You can imagine what confusion arose from the wholesale adoption of new laws and new court procedures. Our lawyers and judges had to go to school and spent a great many months over ponderous books of law. All our judges

were now civil officials and they wore very impressive costumes, black robes with flowing sleeves and a stiff collar.

Turkey has not adopted the jury system; instead the verdict is given by a judge, or a panel of three judges if it is a criminal offense.

The new Civil Code affected the status of women and did away with many old customs and institutions. This subject will be discussed in another chapter. The new code also put an end to polygamy practiced in Moslem countries. Under the old Sheriat laws a man was allowed to have four wives, provided he treated all of them equally, which meant that he had to take care of all of them and the children born from them. Quite a task, which one would think that no man would enjoy. In fact, polygamy was dying in the cities long before the republic was established because it was an economic burden too heavy for one man to carry. In many families polygamy was not practiced. For instance, my father had one wife, so did his father and grandfather before him. It was otherwise in the villages where the peasants by taking four wives acquired four free and willing workers. As a man was always drafted into the army, his four wives took care of the farm if he had any, or supported the children by working on the land of others while their husband was away fighting or doing his military service.

You might wonder how such a system was tolerated by the women. The truth is that women knew nothing different and, being fatalistic, they were resigned and made the best of a system which they could not change.

Not only was polygamy abolished but all marriages today are civil and the right of divorce has been granted to women. In the past only men enjoyed that right and it was very easy for a man to get rid of his wife, as all he had to do was to say, "I divorce thee," before two witnesses and she was divorced.

The first step in a modern marriage is to obtain a medical certificate proving that the engaged couple does not have a contagious disease. Then their names are posted for fifteen days in public places. At the end of that period the young couple with all their relatives drive to the municipal building where a special room is reserved for wedding ceremonies which are performed by a municipal official appointed for that purpose.

The bride usually wears a suit or a simple dress with a corsage sent to her by her future husband. The ceremony takes a few minutes and after the usual "yes" is pronounced by both parties, they sign a register and get a marriage certificate. The couple then either entertain their guests at home, usually the home of the bride, or at a hotel and the festivities last until late at



An informal picture of Kemal Ataturk

night with guests dancing, drinking and refreshing themselves at an elaborate buffet. If the parents wish to keep the old tradition, they can call a *hodja* and have the religious ceremony performed in private, but this is no longer obligatory.

Reform followed reform so rapidly that we felt we were living in a laboratory and taking part in numerous interesting and essential experiments. People began to wonder what else was left to change. We did not remain in the dark for long. Soon the newspapers started on a campaign against our alphabet and our language, which, they argued, needed renovation. It was also rumored that the President, with a commission of experts, was drawing up a new alphabet.

A new alphabet! That was quite a startling thought! At first people did not take it seriously, as ever since the Turks could remember they had used the Arabic script which is written from left to right and is utterly different from the Latin. This alphabet we had adopted from the Arabs after we had accepted the Moslem religion and it had become our own. Not only did we adopt the Arabic script but thousands of words from the Arabs as well as from the Iranians. These additions had vastly enriched the Turkish language



but brought with them many complications. Turkey had really two languages: the literary one used by the educated classes; and the simple one, where Turkish words predominated, and which was used by most people. To know the language well, every child had to study three grammars in school! Even such a simple thing as the plural of a word had three separate rules. The child first had to distinguish whether the word was Turkish, Arabic or Iranian, and then, if the word happened to be Arabic, the Arabic plural was applied and so on.

As for the alphabet itself, which is very beautiful to look at if well written, it was also very difficult to learn and a child required a year or more to acquire it. Once mastered, it was much faster to write than the Latin, for one can chop off parts of a letter and combine them together to write a word.

Our newspapers wrote long articles explaining that the percentage of illiteracy was due to the difficult Arabic alphabet and the many "foreign" words which our writers used. It was not enough to build new schools; a new alphabet was needed and the language had to be cleansed of the Arabic and Iranian words which most people in Anatolia did not know and could not understand.

Commissions headed by the President went into feverish action. The Hungarian and other alphabets were studied and from these a new Turkish Latin alphabet was finally evolved. Another commission studied hundreds of manuscripts in ancient dialects and words found in early inscriptions and documents discovered in Central Asia. A list was then compiled, giving the Turkish equivalent of the Arabic and Iranian words which long ago had been incorporated into the language. For the one word Allah (God) seventeen Turkish equivalents were found. Most people now use the Turkish word *Tanrı* instead of the Arabic Allah.

The President again set out on a tour of Anatolia, where, with the aid of a large blackboard, he demonstrated how easily the new letters could be written and learned. Opinion was divided among the scholars and writers, some maintaining that the change of alphabet and the adoption of old Turkish words which no one had used for centuries would ruin the language. But the majority were for these reforms and they carried the day. In 1928 the new Latin alphabet was officially accepted and every man and woman up to the age of forty had to learn their new ABCs, from the prime minister to the street cleaner. It was a tremendous undertaking. Day and night courses were organized in schools, public buildings, even in movie



Kemal Atatürk teaching the Turkish nation how to write the Latin characters

houses, and all the teachers were required to donate extra time to teach the millions of men and women who flocked to the free courses. At the end of six months, everyone was required to pass a written and oral examination and was given a written certificate to prove that he had mastered the Latin alphabet. Thousands of people in this fashion learned to write their names for the first time and one could see peasants struggling with the newspapers, spelling out each letter painfully. All public signs, newspapers, magazines, official papers are now in the Latin script. And of course every book in Turkey had to be reprinted, a task which has not yet been completed.

The language reform for a time turned our newspapers into Chinese puzzles. They adopted a policy of writing several articles a day, using the old Turkish words long in disuse in order to teach them to the public. A glossary was attached to each article giving the Arabic and Iranian equivalent of these outlandish words which were as difficult to us as foreign ones. To read and to write became a painful task for a while. Just recently the government changed the names of four of our months and is constantly introducing new words not only from the old Turkish but from French as well. But it is hard for people to change and when they speak, they invariably slip into the old way and the Arabic and Iranian words so long familiar to them tumble out, as of old. And very often one will see an envelope addressed in the Latin script but the letter inside is written in the Arabic alphabet.

Just as we were managing our hats quite efficiently and were struggling with our new alphabet, the government asked us to coin for ourselves a brand-new family name! The Turks did not have family names in the past, they did not believe in stressing family names and worshipping ancestors. Our writers and scholars said, "It is not the family that counts but you yourself, and you must make your name worthy." So everyone in Turkey went by his given name and it was impossible to know that little Mehmet was the son of Ali Bey. When Mehmet grew up he became Mehmet Bey, that is all. But there were thousands of Mehmetts, a favorite given name as it is that of our prophet. How did we distinguish between them? As a matter of fact, we did not, for we could not and the only way of pinning a person down was to give him a nickname such as "golden-whiskered Mehmet," "tall Hassan," or "noble Ali." Women, too, went by their given names and when they were married they did not take that of their husband. Fatma Hanoum (lady) remained Fatma Hanoum even though she married Mehmet Bey. It was convenient for the women as the word "Hanoum" could mean both Miss and Mrs. and did not indicate whether a woman was married or

not. By way of explanation one could of course say Fatma Hanoum the wife of Mehmet Bey, but throughout their lives women kept their given name. Fatma is another popular name in Turkey because it was that of the prophet's daughter.

The confusion which arose from millions of Mehmetts, Alis and Hassans was a perennial headache to our government, especially to the post office, but, up to the time of the Republic, no one had thought of remedying this evil. Some years ago, the head of each family was asked to coin a family name, one of pure Turkish origin, and to register it so as to avoid duplication. This gave rise to some peculiar names such as "Ironhead" and "Cleanhand," meaning honest, which a merchant I know has adopted for his family name.

Mustapha Kemal set the example and adopted Ataturk (the father of the Turks) as his new name and henceforth he was known as Kemal Ataturk, the last of the changes his name went through. The President also picked out Inonu for Ismet, his prime minister, because it was at Inonu, a small Anatolian village, that General Ismet (before he became Prime Minister and later the second president of Turkey) won one of the decisive victories in the War of Independence.

My father chose the name of Bulayir, the village where his father, Namik

A college library with boys and girls studying together



Kemal, is buried. He could not take Kemal as he would have liked to do, because Kemal is an Arabic proper name. Bulayir is officially my family name and it is the one written on my passport. But I still use my father's given name of Ekrem because that is the one I acquired when I went to the American School in Istanbul. There I was asked what my father's name was and when I said "Ekrem," I was given the name of "Miss Ekrem" to distinguish me from the other Selmas in the school. It used to amuse my father no end and often, as a joke, he used to call me "Miss Ekrem." No one outside the school ever called me that. Why don't I use my new family name in this country? I have struggled to teach my American friends how to write and pronounce one of my names and I am loath to impose upon them that of Bulayir.

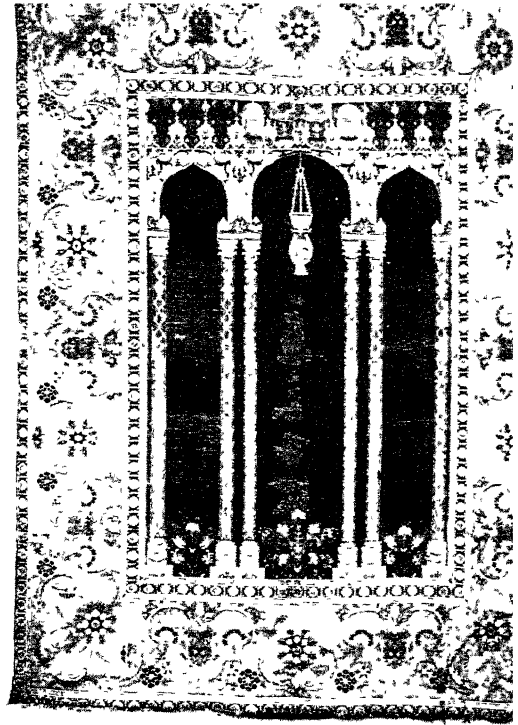
The wholesale adoption of family names has given rise to much confusion and has made strangers of many friends. I must confess that I do not know those of many of my relatives and friends and still call them by their given name as of old. A Turkish business man who is in this country told the following story:

He was asked by one of his American acquaintances if he knew another Turk by the name of "Karabay." The business man shook his head, he had never heard of Mr. Karabay.

"But," said the American, "Mr. Karabay knows you well and says that he went to school with you."

That did not make matters any clearer, as the American did not know Mr. Karabay's given name. When the two Turks finally met, the business man immediately realized that the mysterious Mr. Karabay was his best friend! They had gone to the same school and graduated the same year. The businessman did not happen to know that his friend Ali Bey had taken Karabay for a family name.

It has not only been amusing but highly profitable for a nation to go to school. What other country has undergone such a profound and peaceful revolution? Will these changes that have taken place at a breath-taking rate last? I cannot imagine ever going back to the days of the fez, the veil and the irritating and stifling rules that once governed our lives. The fact that Turkish women are free and are taking part in the building of the republic, as we shall see in the following chapter, leaves no room for doubt that "The Sick Man of Europe," as the Ottoman Empire was once called, is dead and a new Turkey has taken its place.



## *Out of the Harem into the World*

**W**HEN I was a child I used to love visiting my great-grandmother's house in Yildiz, a section of Istanbul which derived its name from the Yildiz Palace or Star Palace, where Sultan Abdul Hamid lived more than thirty years in perpetual fear of being deposed. The place had once swarmed with spies, but now that the tyrant was gone it was a lovely and peaceful section of the city. My greatgrandfather, who had died long before I was born, had taken a second wife late in life after his first wife's death. When I was a little girl she must have been in her seventies and lived with an old retainer in a small wooden house that was much in need of paint.

Hers was a narrow and steep street that wound up a hill, with houses rising on both sides. At the foot of the hill a beggar woman sat cross-legged on a piece of cloth all through the day, her face heavily veiled so no one could see her. Passers-by always dropped a few coins into her lap and were

rewarded with loud prayers for their health. The Moslem religion orders everyone to give a certain percentage of his income to the poor and this gave rise to innumerable beggars that used to fill the streets of Istanbul. Now it is forbidden to beg, but there are many families who still give money, food and clothing to those who ring their doorbells and ask for charity.

A few steps beyond the beggar woman was grandmother's house tucked in among others larger and more pretentious. The wooden door had a heavy iron knocker and when one pounded with it on the iron knob, the door opened mysteriously by itself, a feat which always fascinated me as a child. A cord was tied to the latch inside which stretched to the floor above so that anyone could open the door without having to climb down the steep stairs.

Once the door was opened, we stepped into the down-stairs hall which was really a covered courtyard with packed earth for a floor. It was dim and cool in the summer. A wooden staircase, covered with straw matting, led to the floor above, and from it the old retainer was gazing down curiously to see who the visitors were. A fancy cotton print was tied over her hennaed hair and the long skirt of her cotton dress was neatly tucked into her leather belt. When she recognized us, the old woman ran nimbly down the stairs and greeted my mother by reaching toward the hem of her *tsharchaf* (street costume that women had to wear) and then bringing the hand to her forehead, a salutation which denoted great respect.

Grandmother sat in her parlor whose many windows admitted the sun in great waves of golden glory. Snow-white curtains, neatly starched, hung from the windows and wooden lattices hid the room from the outside world. A low Turkish *minder* ran the whole length of the parlor and on the floor were fat, square pillows stuffed with the softest cotton, an ideal place to sit cross-legged, as most Turkish people still do when they get the chance. There were also sprinklings of European armchairs for those whose legs had gone stiff with westernization, as grandmother used to say in her mischievous way. In the middle of the room a large brass *mangal* stood which in winter would be stacked high with glowing embers, while a porcelain stove was tucked into a corner and together with the *mangal* heated the place when the snow covered the steep hill outside. How often, as a child, I hugged that deep red porcelain stove for warmth and listened to the merry tune the fire sang as the logs crackled and burned briskly. Grandmother often threw a handful of dried *adachayi*, an aromatic herb, into the *mangal* and the leaves as they burned gave out a fragrance that permeated the whole house.

Grandmother always wore on her white hair an organdy headdress edged



An upper class Turkish woman in the time of my Mother's girlhood



with dainty Turkish lace. In the summer she was attired in cool flowered linens, in the winter heavy brocades upon which were embroidered little stars made of gold thread, material which one could no longer buy and no doubt dated from her youth. There she sat, cross-legged, pretty as an old Persian painting, in her special corner close to the window. Her slippers lay neatly on the floor, side by side, for grandmother would not dream of climbing on the clean couch covers wearing her slippers. Close to her hand was an ancient china bowl where she kept her long-tasseled tobacco which she deftly rolled into the thinnest, daintiest cigarettes. Women in Turkey have always smoked and it was never considered out of place for women to do so. Women usually rolled their own, as the ready-made cigarettes were considered too thick and unladylike.

One by one, mother leading the way, we kissed grandmother's soft, white hand which had a faint smell of rose water. In Turkey, kissing the hand is a mark of respect and not an act of gallantry as it is in Europe. Many times I have seen my mother stoop to kiss the hand of an elderly woman, even that of the old nurse who had once taken care of my uncle, or that of an aged male relative whom she respected deeply.

As soon as we had settled down, we children on the fat cushions on the floor, the old retainer came in with a silver tray on which were two small cups of coffee, the light brown foam rising to the very brim. These coffee cups, called *zarf*, were of the best china, broad at the brim and narrow at the base and fitted into silver containers of the same shape, so that people would not burn their fingers while handling the cups.

While grandmother and my mother sipped their delicious beverage and we children looked on with envy, the conversation ran to family affairs. Towards four o'clock, grandmother rose from her couch nimbly and donned her slippers. We all rose from our places as she got up, for no one would dream of sitting down when one's elders and betters are up.

"Sit down, sit down, all of you," grandmother ordered. "The children must be hungry, I am going to see that they get something to eat."

Pretty soon we heard her moving about in her *kiler*, a room where Turkish housewives keep all their staples and delicacies such as jams, pickles, cheese, cookies and other delectable foods. Every Turkish house had a *kiler* and it used to be the favorite room of the children. During spring and summer, grandmother and the old retainer stood by huge copper cauldrons and made jam. They also put up numerous kinds of pickles: small green peppers, eggplant, cabbage, cauliflower, which turned amber-colored in the vinegar.



A Turkish family in the time of Sultan Abdul Aziz

A little later, grandmother reentered the parlor and we all rose to our feet again. She was followed by the old retainer carrying a green tray on which were painted large red roses. What a feast was spread upon it! A dozen small saucers, each one of different color and design contained the jams, a kind of cheese which grandmother called "Albanian cheese" the like of which I have eaten nowhere else, olives and round thick slices of *souchouk*, a highly spiced cured meat flavored with garlic.

In the evenings grandmother sat by candlelight and read from her favorite authors. She never used oil lamps, and electricity had not as yet been introduced into Turkey. She was extremely well educated for her time and could read not only Turkish but Iranian as well. Her favorite subjects were history and poetry and she knew hundreds of verses by heart.

Grandmother was quietly religious, never talked of her faith or preached to anyone. To me she stood out as the best that old Turkey has produced. No one in need was ever turned from her door and she gave generously of her time and money to those who sought her help—the sick, the orphaned and the aged, although she herself had limited funds.

Yet grandmother lived in the era when the harem was the law. The harem has nothing to do with polygamy. A man can have one wife and still

have a harem. The word means either "wife" or a separate apartment reserved for women. Every Turkish house was divided into the harem, where the women and children lived and entertained, and the *selamlık*, where the master of the house received his guests, carried on his business and where his sons, when they grew up did the same. It was really in the harem that the family lived, but the selamlık was used because women could not appear before friends of their husbands or men who came to the house. In many families there was the selamlık kitchen presided over by a man cook, and the harem kitchen in charge of a woman. If the master of the house had guests for dinner, his wife never appeared before them; they ate in the selamlık dining room and were served by menservants. During my childhood, though, many families did not follow this system and in my family my mother was free to show her face to anyone in her own house.

But out of the house the harem system was rigidly enforced. All trolley cars had six seats separated by a heavy red curtain behind which the women sat. Ferry boats had a separate room for women and children, and women could not sit anywhere else on the boat. When the ticket collector entered the place, many of the old-fashioned women quickly threw their veils over their faces. If a young girl failed to follow their example, the elderly women would "close their eyes and open their mouths" as we say in Turkish and give the poor things a thorough scolding. In fact, all public places were thus divided and men and women segregated.

When one speaks of Turkish women and the customs that governed them in the past, one has to make a distinction between the peasants and the townswomen. Strangely enough, the uneducated peasants enjoyed far more freedom than the city women. Working in the fields like men from dawn to sunset, the peasant women could not very well cover their faces tightly and hide from every man. Hence in the villages one could see women with faces uncovered, while in the city they were heavily veiled and, when they rode in a carriage, the curtains were pulled down. The peasant women also had the right to work, while in the cities women as a rule did not. On the other hand the village women were not educated and many of them who ran a farm efficiently could not even write their own names.

There was a time, though, when Turkish women were absolutely free. Reading the old books and documents dealing with the life of the Turks before the conquest of Istanbul, one finds that women were considered the equal of men by our ancestors. They were neither veiled nor secluded and the family was under the joint guardianship of both parents. Widows were



Grandmother is just as shy as her grandchildren. The little girl wears the *yemeni*, a Turkish headdress

the sole guardians of their children and managed their own property and money. Even the queens of old were not mere show pieces and no edict could become valid unless it contained the signatures of both the King and his consort. One of the Turkish queens in 528 succeeded her husband to the throne and led her armies in the field of battle.

How, then, did the Turkish women lose their ancient freedom? When the Turks conquered Istanbul they discovered veiled women and apartments where they were segregated, for the Byzantine Greeks did not allow their women much liberty. The Turkish men were much impressed with what they saw and it began to dawn on our ancestors that it might not be such a bad thing to keep women at home. And as our Sultans became more and more autocratic, women, too, were restricted and gradually lost every right they had had for many centuries. This great event in Turkish history, the capture of Istanbul, marks the beginning of a life behind the curtain and the veil. Imperial edicts were even issued to control women's dresses and their behavior. Here is one picked out of many. During the reign of Selim the

Third in 1807, civil officials were appointed to check up on the laws regulating the opening of a woman's dress. If these men caught a dressmaker with a gown having a lower neck than that prescribed by the edict, the dressmaker was immediately punished!

It was only in the middle of the nineteenth century that the first schools for women were opened and some of the strict regulations relaxed. Women of that period wore the *feradje* and *yashmak*, a costume most becoming to them. The *feradje* was a tight-fitting satin coat that fell in graceful folds to the tips of a woman's shoes and the *yashmak* was a white organdy toque and a piece of organdy that covered the lower part of the face but allowed the eyes and the hair to be seen. Our grandmothers felt daring indeed when they stepped out in the streets in their yellow, red, blue, green and mauve silk coats, each like a spring flower. They had fun too, according to my grandmother. In spring, the *caiques*, slender and long rowboats shaped like huge slices of melon curved at both ends, would slide over the blue waters of the Bosphorus. They were manned by boatmen attired in snow-white tunics, richly embroidered and with flowing sleeves, who dipped their oars in perfect unison, shooting the slender craft speedily onward. The wealthy families had several of these beautiful *caiques*, some elaborately festooned with intricate designs. The favorite pastime of the Istanbul ladies was to be rowed to the Sweet Waters of Asia, a narrow stream which flowed into the Bosphorus with houses built on both its green banks. Attired in their multi-colored *feradjes*, the women took the air guarded by a stern eunuch or an old retainer with a keen eye. Other *caiques* carried young men in their tall red *fezzes*. As the slender crafts headed towards the source of the stream, *caiques* touched *caiques* and what a time our grandmothers had flirting slyly behind their fans! The bolder young men at times spoke to the ladies, but these would turn their heads away, for they knew that they were being watched.

When Sultan Hamid came to the throne-these mild pastimes and the gorgeous *feradjes* vanished, for he was a jealous ruler and did not want the women of his palace to expose their faces in public. The *feradje* was replaced by the ugly and stern *tsharchaf* which made a woman look like a bundle, shapeless and clumsy. The *tsharchaf* which Turkish women had to wear until the republic, and which some still cling to, was a loose long skirt made of heavy black silk and tied at the waist. A long silk *pelerin* of the same material as the skirt covered the upper part of the body and also the head and held in place the thick, black veil which fell over the face. In that



Young girls from a village in Southeastern Turkey wearing their best clothes

costume not even a strand of hair could be seen and no one could know whether the wearer was old or young.

After Sultan Hamid was dethroned and a constitutional government established, the women became restive. The new government was going to do nothing to remove the ridiculous restrictions that made life unbearable, especially to the younger generation. More and more schools had been opened for women and some even went to Europe to secure a higher education, but they could do nothing with their learning. The ugly tsharchaf grew shorter, the veil thinner, but still women had to wear it in public, and husband and wife could not attend a public place together. Women still sat behind the heavy curtain in trolley cars and the life of segregation continued. Under these conditions marriages were still arranged by the family as they had been for hundreds of years.

That brings us to one of the most colorful customs of the old days—picking the bride, and the wedding ceremony—both of which are fast dying out under the republic. Suppose there was a young man who had reached his nineteenth year. His mother immediately began to look about for a suitable bride for him. The neighbors who came to visit her were only too glad to discuss all the eligible young girls they knew. After listening to many descriptions and many praises from the relatives of young girls, the mother of the boy would decide which one of them would make a good wife for her son. Her choice, let us say, fell on young Fatma, the daughter of Emin Bey, who lived in the same section of the city. Word was sent to the house of Emin Bey that an interested party would like to “look over his daughter,” as the proper term ran. Emin Bey was naturally anxious to marry off his daughter. He inquired about the young man and the standing of the family, and if satisfied, he would send word through his wife that he was willing. At that the mother of the young man called a carriage and drove in great style to the house.

Emin Bey's household was twittering with excitement; all the women—the old retainers, the maids and the nurse—peered from behind the lattices at the visitor. She was received with ceremony by the lady of the house, seated upon the best couch, and made as comfortable as possible. The two women did not broach the all-important subject, instead they talked of the weather and inquired politely about their respective healths. A few minutes later, the young girl of the house, dressed in her best finery and wearing the family jewels, entered the room carrying a silver tray in her hands on which were two cups of coffee. She served these to the guest and to her mother and

then sat on the edge of a chair with downcast eyes, a picture of humility and submission. The visitor while sipping her coffee studied the young girl to her heart's content, while from the crack of the door the old retainers, the nurse and the maids peered cautiously and silently. The coffee drained to the last drop, the young girl rose and picked up the empty cups and left the room to be surrounded by the excited women outside. If the visitor approved of the young girl, she would call again and formally ask her hand in marriage for her son.

You can imagine how anxiously the young man awaited the arrival of his mother and how eagerly he plied her with questions. Was the girl fair and tall, or dark with an inclination to plumpness? Mother answered as best she could and usually told her son that her experienced eye had detected in Emin Bey's daughter an ideal wife for him.

In this fashion the mother picked a bride for her son, and if the respective families were liberal the young people were allowed to see one another under strict chaperonage.

Then came the wedding with all its pomp and ceremony and many customs born out of the restriction of Turkish women. All marriages took place at home, usually the house of the bride, and lasted three days and three nights—an endless round of feasting and merrymaking. The actual wedding ceremony was performed by proxy because the bride could not even show her face to the *hodja*. The bride and bridegroom each selected *vekils* or representatives and did not even appear at their own wedding ceremony. As the *nikah*, the marriage, took place in the home of the bride, the young man's representatives drove there, where the others were already gathered. The bride's representatives then went to the room where the young girl was waiting for them with her mother and asked her through a crack in the door:

"Fatma Hanoum, are you willing to marry Mehmet Bey?"

No answer! It was considered good manners to remain silent until the question had been asked three times. Then and only then did a timid "yes" float through the crack of the door. Any woman who disregarded this unwritten law was considered bold, an unpardonable sin in those days, and over-anxious to get married. Luckily the vekils knew this habit of young girls and utterly disregarded the silence until they had obtained the right answer.

The wedding was followed by the *koltouk*, and what a ceremony it was in the old days! The bride's family went into a fever of activity and did not spare the gold. Cooks were hired to prepare the wedding feast and the house





Women of Afyon Karahisar gathered around a well

thrown open to hundreds of relatives and friends. The day of the koltouk, the bridegroom drove in a closed carriage to the home of his in-laws, which was by then filled to capacity with women guests. No men were present in the daytime, their turn would come at night. The bridegroom was rushed upstairs through the guests who hastily sought cover, and ushered into the room where the bride sat alone on a sofa in the middle of the room. She wore her wedding gown and was covered with all the jewels the family owned, plus those they had borrowed from friends and relatives or had hired for the occasion from the bazaars. There used to be special jewelry stores which did a thriving business renting real diamond diadems and other ornaments to prospective brides! The bride's face was covered by a heavy white veil. Husband and wife were left alone, then, and only then, he lifted the veil and looked at her face for the first time. But, as I have said before, that was not always true if the families were liberal. He usually gave her a gift, a diamond

bracelet if he were wealthy, and finally led her down the stairs, scattering silver and golden coins among the women guests, all duly veiled. The women scampered about to gather them, as they were supposed to bring good luck. This done, the bridegroom left the house.

The bride, poor thing, did not get off so easily. She had to sit on a sofa in all her finery while the guests walked in circles about her. She sat straight as a statue and said nothing as the guests admired or criticized her dress, her jewels, her face and her veil quite openly, the while they sipped coffee and sirup and munched candy. At noon they sat down to a sumptuous banquet which opened with the traditional "wedding soup" and ended with the *zerde pilaf*, a rice dish cooked with saffron. Course after course was served: several kinds of meat and fowl; *beureks*, stuffed with minced chicken and brains; vegetables cooked in olive oil and others with lamb, tomatoes and onions; and rich sweetmeats. The guests ate until they could not move. To celebrate the event, the poor of the quarter were also fed and many took food to their homes and blessed the newlyweds.

At night the feasting and eating started all over again when the men gathered and were entertained lavishly. It was strictly a stag party and the bride did not have to sit and be looked at as she had been during the day.

In this fashion Fatma Hanoum was married to her Mehmet Bey, and the guests ate and made merry and the poor were fed and blessed Allah and everyone was utterly exhausted.

World War One broke some of the shackles that had bound the city women. The men were drafted into the army and women had to take some of the jobs left vacant. They went into nursing and some even worked in offices and for the government. One day an old woman, attired in a man's suit with a black kerchief covering her hair and part of her face, arrived in our street, broom in hand. She was one of many women streetcleaners who worked for the Istanbul Sanitation Department all through the war, doing an excellent job of cleaning. Women also demanded the right to higher education and finally were allowed to cross the threshold of that august institution the Istanbul University, and study side by side with the men.

During the War of Independence the women, especially the Anatolian peasants, showed a heroism and a fortitude that won for them the admiration of the whole country. Women enrolled in the regular army and fought on many battlefields; some were killed, others wounded. When train communications were broken down, they carried ammunition to the front, walking many miles over rough roads with heavy shells on their backs. They took



A woman doctor bends down as the child obediently "opens wide."

care of the wounded in improvised hospitals where there were not enough bandages and medicine to go around. The women tilled their farms while artillery fire pounded in their ears and the huge shells opened craters at their feet. Many a city woman left her comfortable home to join the Nationalist forces and live in perpetual danger and discomfort by the side of her husband. Others had a voice in the government set at Ankara. As a tribute to their achievement, a peasant woman carrying a big shell is depicted beside Atatürk on the monument of independence erected at Ankara to commemorate the victory won by the Turkish people.

During the national emergency the Turkish woman had made enormous strides on the road to freedom. Would the new republic force her back into the harem and the era of the veil? But Kemal Atatürk realized that the country needed free, educated women if it ever would



Modern Turkish students enjoying a joke

assimilate the changes he had in mind. Women must assume their rights.

He toured the country again, urging women to throw off their veils, to take part in national affairs and step into their rightful places. He said in one of his speeches that no country could advance with half of society free and the other half lacking all freedom. The President was diplomatic, too. At one of the numerous balls given at Ankara, he saw an elderly lady wearing a black kerchief over her head. Approaching the woman, Atatürk told her:

"You have beautiful hair. Why do you hide it under this ugly veil?"

Kemal Atatürk used persuasion to free the women; no laws were passed forbidding the tsharchaf or the veil. The seclusion of women was also bound up with religion and there were many men who objected to seeing their wives or their daughters appearing in public without the traditional costume. Kemal Atatürk showed us the way, and those who wanted to follow could

do so. Henceforth the police could not arrest a woman if she appeared in a public place or wore a hat. Naturally the younger generation heard the President and rejoiced; they were ready to step out of their harems into a new life opening before them.

Perhaps no sight aroused more concern and curiosity than the first woman who boldly wore a hat and stepped out into the street. The men stared, the women in their tsharchafs stared even harder and some, I must say, grumbled beneath their breath. I can remember that many an elderly woman swore she would never discard the veil, but today some of them are wearing hats.

It was as if an iron hand that had gripped us for centuries had been shattered at one blow. I can still remember with what joy I left my home, head high, wearing my hat and realizing that no one could pursue me with angry words. Nothing has quite equalled that first joy of freedom which I tasted in my native land.

The emancipation of women has changed the face of Turkey just as the hat and the Latin alphabet did. The curtains are gone and women now sit side by side with the men. They stand up, too, hanging to a strap, when the trolleys are crowded. Husband and wife can go together anywhere they want, eat together in a restaurant or attend a concert. Out in the tennis courts, young women play a rigorous game of tennis and their partners are often young men. Instead of sitting in the slender caiques of old, the young Turkish girl of today rows her own craft and handles her own sailboat as efficiently as a man.

The new Civil Code gave women the right to work, to be educated, the right to obtain a divorce and to be the sole wife of a man. Women also inherit equally with their brothers instead of half as they did before. All higher institutions of learning, such as the medical and law schools, are open to women and many are enrolled in these classes with a definite idea of building for themselves a career.

In 1930 the Grand National Assembly passed a law giving women the right to participate in municipal elections. And, in 1935, the Assembly granted them full political rights by giving them the vote. The voting age was changed from 18 to 21 when women obtained suffrage. At the first election after the new law was passed, seventeen women were elected to serve in the new parliament.

The Turkish woman has come a long way since I sat in grandmother's wooden house at Yildiz and listened to the stories of her youth.



## *The Republic Reforms the Land*

TURKEY is the only country, besides the U.S.S.R., which is at home on two continents—Europe and Asia. Here in the United States you associate yourselves with the country rather than the American continent because your land is so vast and a world unto itself. But the Turks, with one foot on Europe and the other on Asia, have always been conscious of these two civilizations that have influenced their lives and shaped their history.

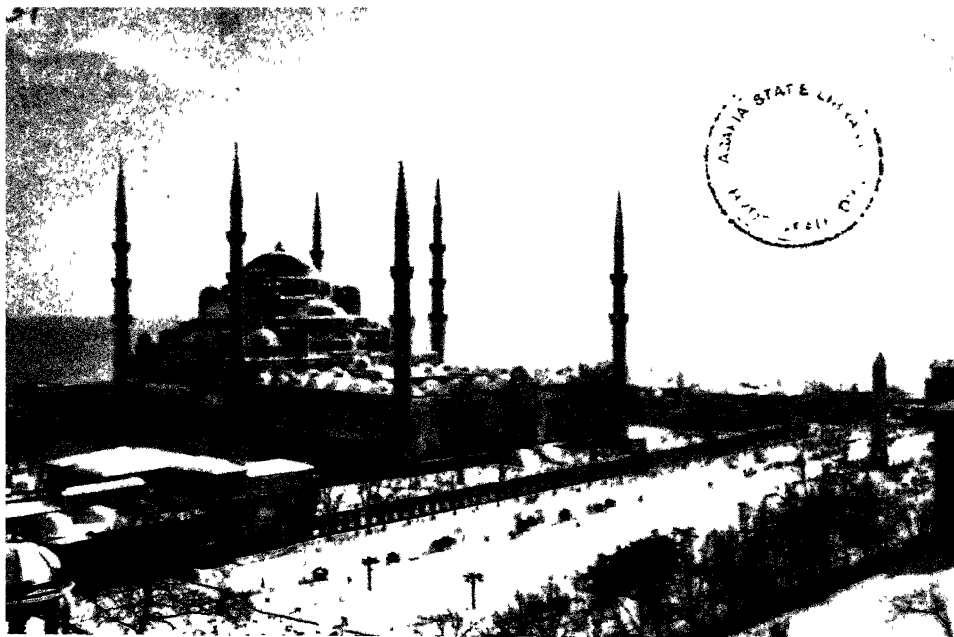
Turkey forms the famous narrow bridge between Europe and Asia, a strategic position which resulted in the rapid rise of the Ottoman Empire, as we have already seen, and provoked many wars. Due to its geographical position, the country from time immemorial has been overrun by many tribes and nations. The western nations, as was the case with the Greeks, the Romans and the Germans, pushed eastward, while the Seljuk Turks, the Tartars and the Osmanlis surged ever westward across the land bridge.

Our location has given us varied and interesting neighbors to trade and deal with. To the east of us lies the immense and powerful U.S.S.R., with whom for centuries we had been at war when Russia was an empire ruled by the Tzars and Turkey under the Sultans. But with the rise of the Turkish republic and of the Soviet Union the two countries have been friends until recently (in 1945) when the U.S.S.R., for reasons best known to its leaders, denounced the treaty of friendship and neutrality we had signed with the Soviet Union in 1925. Again to the east lies another vast stretch of land called the Near East, most of which was part of the Ottoman Empire up to 1919, inhabited by the Arabs and the Iranians. Our close neighbors to the east, then, are the Russians, the Iranians, the Syrians, the Iraqis; while the people of Palestine and Egypt and Trans-Jordan are not far removed. To the north, Turkey is bounded by the Black Sea and to the west we have common frontiers with Bulgaria and Greece. Beyond these live the Rumanians, the Albanians, the Yugoslavs, the Hungarians and the Poles. To the south stretch the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. Certainly an interesting part of the world to live in but, unfortunately for all concerned, a troubled and explosive region as well. War after war has shaken and almost ruined the small nations who live on the fringe of Europe close to the Asiatic continent. The only thing that the people of Eastern Europe and the Near East want is peace and the right to build up their own countries without outside interference.

Today Turkey in Europe is a small strip of land about the size of New Hampshire, while Anatolia or Asia Minor forms the real home of the Turks. Dividing the two continents are the Dardanelles, which connect the Sea of Marmora with the Aegean, and the Bosphorus which in turn connects the Marmora with the Black Sea. Control of these narrow straits means control of the Black Sea, and that explains in part why Istanbul was coveted by many nations.

The Turks call the Bosphorus "Bogazichi," or the inside of the throat, a very apt name as it is a narrow crooked finger of water thrusting itself between two great masses of land. It is also one of the most beautiful waterways in the world.

Compared to the United States, Turkey is a small country, about the size of the combined areas of Texas and New York. But as countries go in Europe it is fairly large, bigger than France or pre-war Germany. Indeed, the Turks are satisfied with their size and are only concerned in making the country a better place in which to live. There is no question of overpopula-

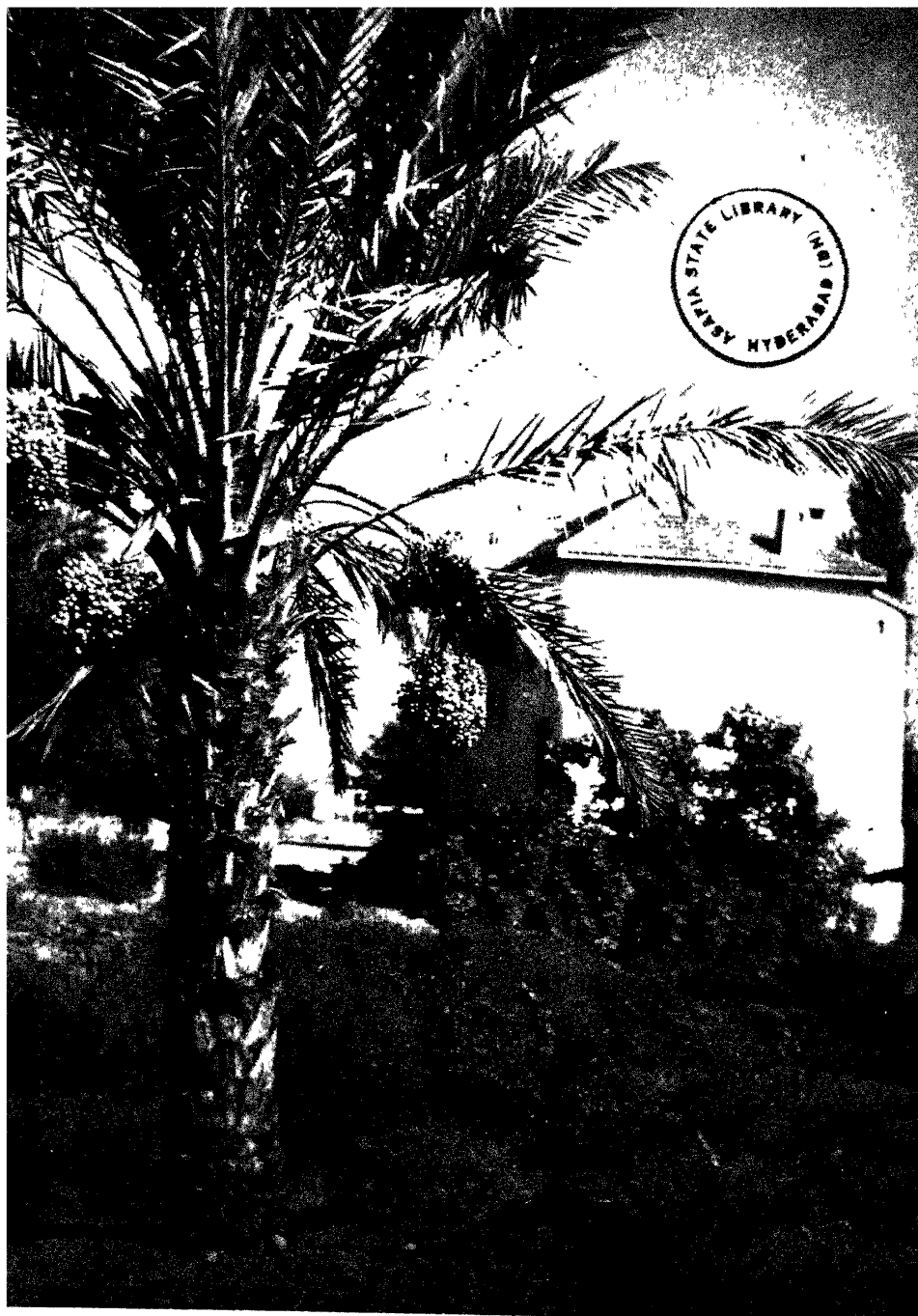


Heavy snow covers the ancient Hippodrome and Mosque of Sultan Ahmet in Istanbul

tion, either; a little less than 19 million Turks are spread rather thinly over Asia Minor and Turkey in Europe. Although the birthrate is high, the many wars, exchange of populations and infant mortality have taken their toll in the past so that the country is still underpopulated. That may explain in part why so few Turks leave their homeland and why they are rather a curiosity in the United States.

Some people have an idea that Turkey is a tropical country and that it never snows there. Invariably someone asks me if I have gotten used to the cold winters in America. They picture the Turks basking under a hot sun the year long and gasping for breath. As a matter of fact, it gets quite cold in my country and there are heavy snowfalls, especially in our eastern provinces and the mid-Anatolian plateau. The climate in that section can be compared to the northwestern United States, cold in the winter and very hot in the summer. Along the Aegean and Mediterranean shoreline there is no snowfall and the temperature is mild. The Istanbul climate is changing, growing milder. My father used to say that when he was a boy the snow did not leave the ground for three months of the winter. Anyhow, as a Turkish wag put it, there is no climate in Istanbul, only the north and south





Date trees in the Southern part of Turkey



Skiing on Mt. Olympus in Bursa

An old castle off Mersin with a camel cooling himself in the sea



winds. When the north wind sweeps from the Black Sea, Istanbul shivers and the snow covers the ground. But the south wind, blowing from the Aegean, invariably brings in its wake milder days. An attack of the south wind in the summer is most uncomfortable, as the temperature soars beyond 80° and it gets almost as sticky as it does in New York. Luckily, the heat never lasts more than a day or two and with the change of wind come cooler days. In Istanbul we blame everything on the south wind, our headaches, our fits of ill-temper and our nervousness, which is very convenient indeed.

Turkey then has a varied climate; it is also a land of geographical contrasts. Anatolia is made up of two high plateaus, an extension westward of the vast plateaus of Tibet. The central Anatolian plateau rises 6,000 feet above sea level while the plateau of eastern Anatolia is about 2,500 feet high. Central Anatolia is bounded on the north by the Black Sea mountains and on the south by the Taurus Chains, its principal peaks reaching to a height of 7000 to 10,000 feet. Between the mountains to the north and those of the south are several other chains and from one of them, near the city of Kayseri, rises Mount Argaeus, 13,000 feet high and the highest peak in Asia Minor.

The Anatolian plateau is barren, covered with snow in the winter while the summer sun scorches the treeless plain and the naked hills that cut it at intervals. Here the rainfall is small and not much is grown except the good hard wheat, a type which is highly prized in Turkey and grown in increasing quantities. The plateau also affords excellent grazing ground and one can see flocks of sheep and goats roaming over the sparsely populated areas.

The Ankara, or Angora goat as you call it, a species with unusually long and soft hair, gives us the mohair wool and is the peasant's chief source of income. Up to 1850, Angora goats were raised exclusively in Turkey and their exportation was forbidden. But that year the reigning Sultan decided to present a few pairs to the British, despite the opposition of the peasants, who felt that their livelihood would be threatened. The Angora goats were taken to South Africa where they began to thrive and their wool was sold to the United States for a high profit until the Americans decided to try and raise them in California. The experiment succeeded and that is how the Angora goat, native of Turkey, crossed oceans and continents and established itself in the United States.

Turkey, too, has its California and the Turks who live in that region are as proud of their climate and fertile soil as is the Californian. Travelling south from the Anatolian plateau towards Turkey's southern coastline, the



Harvesting grapes in the vineyards of Manisa

land slopes down into green meadows, rich vineyards, orchards abundant with fruits and fields where grow wheat, tobacco, and cotton, three of our chief products. The region surrounding "Guzel Izmir" (Beautiful Smyrna), as the Turks call their second largest city and one of their best and busiest ports, is the richest and most generous in the whole country. The climate here is warm during winter, hot and dry in the summer and reminds one of California. After the gray hills and plateau of Anatolia, one rejoices to see the green fields, the rich farms, the orchards and vineyards that make this region the wealthiest in Turkey. The trim houses with their red tiled roofs stretching to the blue sea indicate that here the farmers are well-off and live in comparative ease.

In the region close to the Marmora and Aegean Seas grow Turkey's abundant wheat, her best fruits and her chief source of export, her excellent tobacco, millions of pounds of which are sold yearly to the United States

to blend into American cigarettes. The United States is now experimenting with Turkish tobacco and trying to grow it in the south, which must be a source of concern to the Turkish tobacco growers who depend largely on the American market.

¶ Tobacco was first introduced into Turkey in the year 1610 from Iran. But for a long time the Sultans forbade their subjects to smoke and heavy penalties were imposed on those who broke the law. Finally the people were allowed to smoke, provided they paid a tax and obtained a license. Today the manufacture of cigarettes is a state monopoly and an important source of income for the government.

I must say in all fairness that the fruits grown in Turkey surpass by far in taste and fragrance those raised in California. I am sure that the Americans who have been in my country will agree with me. Nowhere have I eaten grapes, figs, melons or strawberries that compared in taste to those grown in my native land.

The greatest pleasure for a Turkish peasant is his vineyard. One can see the men and women tending their vines from early morning to sunset. For miles on end, the sun shines on luxuriant bunches of purple and yellow

Fig orchard in Ayden, not far from Smyrna





Izmir figs drying in the sun

Turkish women sorting and packing figs for the market



grapes. When ripe, they are snipped carefully into wicker baskets and taken to market. Grapes form an important source of wealth and Izmir is famous throughout the grape markets of the world for the sun-dried Sultana raisins shipped to many countries, including the United States.

Up to the time of the republic no use was made of our excellent grapes in the manufacture of wines or other alcoholic beverages, because the Moslem religion prohibits drinking. In 1927, the government created an Alcohol Monopoly and started to make wine and also liqueurs from our strawberries, raspberries and other fruits. Although many people drink in Turkey, those who adhere strictly to the dictates of the Moslem religion do not. The principal drink of the country is *raği*, made of pure grape juice, and when water is added to the colorless liquid it turns milky white and is powerful enough to suit those who crave potent liquor.

Who has not heard of the Izmir fig, dripping with honey when ripe and just as good to eat when dried in the sun? Figs, like raisins, form another important source of income. The Calimyrna fig grown in California is of Turkish origin. Cuttings of Izmir figs were planted some years ago and seemed to like your shores. But I leave to the experts to decide which is the better fruit, the Calimyrna or the original Izmir fig.

Farther to the south, in the region of Adana, grows Turkey's second important crop, cotton, which plays an important part in her economy. We grow enough cotton to feed the new mills started by the government.

The Black Sea region, also tempered by the sea, is another fertile section. There, especially about Samsun, grow some of our best tobacco, oranges and hazelnuts, which are exported to America in increasing quantities. I have also heard that the government is trying to grow tea in Rize, close to the Black Sea, but as yet China need not be alarmed that her place as a tea-growing country will be threatened.

The soil of Turkey, though arid and barren in some sections, is rich and fertile in the arable areas. Besides our chief agricultural products, already mentioned, we also raise filberts, pistachios, barley, corn and olives in great quantities. Around Afyon Karahisar we grow poppies from which opium is made. In 1933 laws were passed limiting the growth of poppies to a quantity sufficient for medicinal purposes.

Turkey, then, is primarily an agricultural and stock-raising country with 70 per cent of the population engaged in one form or another on the land. The city people are apt to call the Anatolian peasant a *koylu*, which translated literally means a villager or a peasant. It is the Turkish *koylu* who has



Turkish women planting young tobacco shoots

borne the brunt of many wars in the past. Dragged into the army, he was forced to leave his home and his farm to fight from the desert of Arabia to the Balkans. Taxed heavily by the imperial government, oppressed and neglected and often ridiculed, the Anatolian *koylu* nevertheless continued to till the soil as best he could. Year after year, despite wars, drought, floods and earthquakes, he raised the good hard wheat, the corn and the many vegetables and fruits to feed himself, his animals and the nation. While the Sultans squandered money on wars, on beautifying Istanbul and their own pleasures, Anatolia was treated like a stepchild. Her cities fell into ruin, her roads were poor and few, her natural resources went untapped and nothing was done to improve the lot of the peasants or to increase the yield of the land.

My father, whose fund of stories was extensive, told me the following





Threshing wheat by hand below Mount Ararat in the eastern section of Turkey

one, which illustrated that many people in Turkey were aware of this sad condition.

It seems that our saintly father Adam was bored with Paradise. He had lived there too long and wanted a change. He called the Angel Gabriel and told him:

"Oh, Angel Gabriel, I have an awful yearning to see once again the land where I was born."

"Come with me," replied Gabriel, "and I'll take you there."

So they flew over vast stretches of sea and over many countries and each time the Angel asked:

"Is this the land of your childhood?"

But Adam, looking down at prosperous cities with their chimneys belching smoke, shook his head sadly.

Finally Gabriel led him eastward and they came upon the land of the Turks, where Adam saw a man bent double over a wooden plow.

"Oh, Gabriel, go no farther," Adam told him happily. "This is indeed the land where I was born and nothing has changed there since I left long ago." And in my father's time this was all too true.

But things have changed since then, and Adam, if he were to fly over Anatolia today, might be surprised indeed. When the republican government took over from the Sultans, agricultural conditions were at their lowest. Turkey is a wheat-growing country, as we have seen, and could produce enough not only to satisfy her needs but for export as well. And yet in 1923, about \$8,000,000 worth of Russian and American wheat and flour had been bought to meet the nation's requirement. This sum could be ill-spared by the Turkish people. Lack of irrigation, undrained swamps and barren soil made sections of Turkey unfit for cultivation. Thousands of peasants were too poor to own their own land and the poorer farmers were given no incentive to produce more than their needs. Such was the state of affairs when the republic was founded.

The government realized that Turkey would remain essentially an agricultural country and set about to improve the land, increase production and educate the peasants.

To encourage more production, the landless peasants were given a plot of their own. This was not done, as it was in Russia, by confiscating large estates. To begin with, there are few big landowners in Turkey, most of them in the southern part of the country. On these estates, ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 acres, cotton is grown. The majority of the farms are from 6 to 10 acres and on these the country's best crops are grown. On the other hand, there were vast tracts of land belonging to the state and the church that lay idle. When the church was separated from the state, as we shall see later, church lands were taken over by the government and, together with government-owned property, divided among the poor peasants. About two million acres were thus given to the peasants. The Turks enjoy cooperation and like to work together, but the Turkish farmer, like the American one, wants his own plot of land, modest as it is. He wants to work on soil which is his own and he wants to be sure that the crops he raises, by dint of hard-ship, will not be taken over by the government.

The distribution of land did not present a problem but to educate the peasants to raise better crops in a scientific way was a far more difficult question. The peasants, as we have already seen, were ignorant. To them books, pamphlets, charts and exhibits meant nothing. They had to see with their own eyes the better grains, fruits and other products before they would be willing to discard methods used for generations. "What was good for my father is good enough for me," was the attitude of the majority.

To realize what the government is doing to help the peasants and reform

the land, let us follow the career of a farmer's little boy. We will call him Mehmet, as that is an easy name. Mehmet's father has a small farm and a large family, and, like many Anatolian farmers, he is not well-to-do. Mehmet loves the soil, the tall wheat shimmering in the early morning sun, the fragrant grass of the meadows, the animals grazing peacefully while their bells tinkle sweetly in the distance. He too is going to be a farmer when he grows up. But he wants to be a better farmer than his father. He has decided to leave his village and join the Village Institute set up by the government some fifty miles away. There he can have a free education.

His father at first grumbles against Mehmet's going and his mother hates to part from him. Mehmet at fifteen is of invaluable help to his parents. But they finally give in and Mehmet is to ride over with the neighbor who has business in the village where the Institute is located.

The ox team is ready at the door. Mehmet kisses his mother, who furtively wipes her eyes. Turkish people are devoted to their children, who usually remain home or close to home even when they grow up. His father coughs loudly and fidgets uneasily to hide his emotions. The younger children cling to their elder brother and weep unashamed. Mehmet is moved, too; he is almost ready to give up the idea of going away. Who will take care of *Pamuk* (Cotton), his pet lamb who follows him around like a dog? But he cannot weaken now; he is determined to be educated and learn to be a good farmer, to help his family and his country. With a last kiss, he shoulders his small bundle, the few clothes which his mother has tied in a bright red handkerchief.

"Go with laughter," they call after him, as the ox team sets out slowly over the rough country road.

Mehmet and "Mr. Uncle," as Mehmet calls the neighbor respectfully, although they are not related, arrive at the small village. Mehmet rubs his eyes as he sees the many buildings, the acres of well-cultivated land stretching at the outskirts of the village. This is the Institute where he will not only receive a regular education but learn all there is to know about farming.

The boy is welcomed by the headmaster and given his bed and bedding and an overall to wear while he works. Then he is turned over to an older student who takes him all through the place.

"We are not only farmers here," the older boy tells Mehmet, "but carpenters, masons, painters and well diggers. Every building you see was put up by the students. We also learn how to take care of draft animals, repair our own machinery and do grafting. Wait and see what wonderful crops we



Farmers using modern machinery to harvest their grain



Young peasant girls picking cotton which grows in Adana and Mersin



Music is taught in the schools and these girls are members of one of the orchestras organized under the Republic

raise here at the school. You will not believe your own eyes."

The golden wheat stands higher here than Mehmet had ever seen. Corn grows in another field and vegetables fill the truck gardens. There is also a tree nursery which stretches as far as the eye can see.

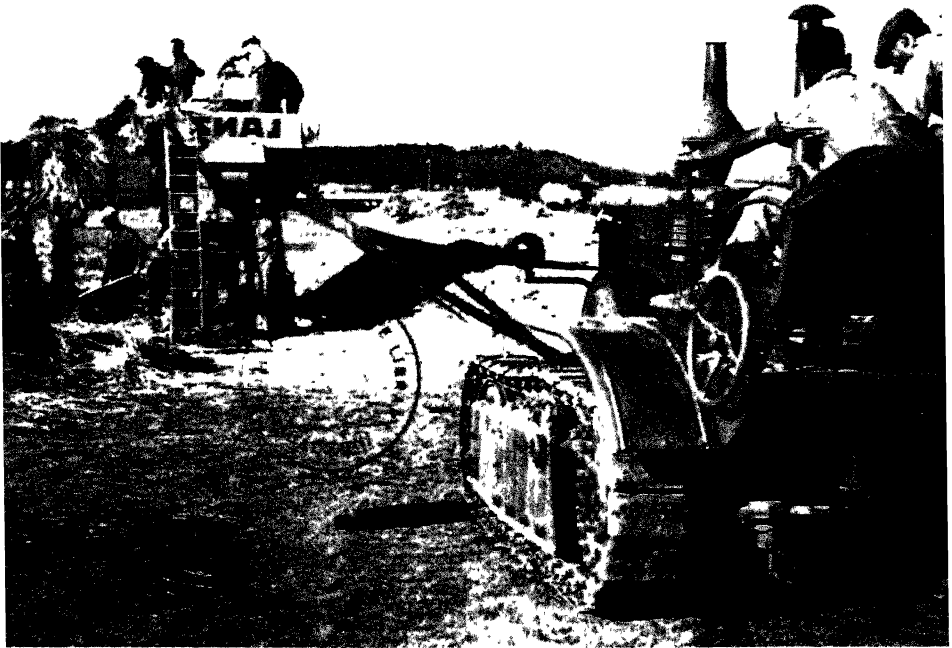
Mehmet is astounded to see a young girl walking toward them. Yes, his comrade explains, there are also girls studying at the Institute. They learn how to cook, sew, embroider, also music and painting, if they are artistically inclined, and receive a regular education as well, just like the boys do. Many of them learn about farming, for they come of peasant stock and their mothers worked on farms most of their lives.

At night the students, some five hundred boys and girls, gather in the huge dining-room and sit at long wooden tables made by the boys. The food is excellent, every bit of it raised on the place and prepared by the students. The bread baked at the Institute is whiter and tastier than any Mehmet has ever eaten.

Soon the village boy has become part of the school and he loves it. Avid to learn, he listens attentively to his teachers. What he loves best is to work on the fat rich acres and watch the green shoots rising strong and healthy under the summer sun. He also loves touring the villages, as the students do once a year. That is part of their education. Loaded with the best seeds, farm implements and some livestock raised on the school farm, they go from village to village explaining to the farmers how to raise equally good crops and breed robust animals.

After five years of hard work, Mehmet graduates from the Institute. He is a man now, strong and wiry and bronzed by the sun. Upon graduation he receives, like others, a plot of land, some farm implements and a few head of cattle, and sets forth for his village. There, with the help of his comrades, he builds a small house which will serve him as school and workshop. His family is proud of him but the other farmers look at the young man with suspicion. They whisper among themselves that his head has been turned with all the new notions he learned at "that place." Mehmet has to win them over patiently.

Probably the ice is broken when a farmer's sheep falls sick and the man does not know what to do for the animal. Hearing the news, Mehmet hurries to the corral. The old peasant is annoyed at first. Imagine a mere boy telling him what to do! But Mehmet, luckily for him, diagnoses the ailment, which is nothing serious. With good care the animal is restored to health. The young man is called into the house and offered coffee. Word spreads quickly



Tractors from the cooperatives help the farmer with his harvesting

throughout the village that Mehmet is a miracle worker. The rest is easy. Soon his small workshop is crowded with farmers who come to look at his seeds, his exhibits and listen to what he has to say. They even ask his advice on love and marriage!

These Village Institutes, of which there are eighteen in Turkey, have graduated thousands of young men and women, and through their efforts the peasants are learning scientific methods of cultivation and animal husbandry. Besides these Institutes, the government has also opened thirteen agricultural schools and sends hundreds of students to study in America and also to Europe before the war. The army, too, is helping in this educational program. The able non-commissioned officers are given a course while taking their military training, very much like that Mehmet received at the Institute.

In this way the government has organized a system of adult education whereby the youth of the country teach their fathers. But how easily Turkey's production could be increased tenfold if the farmers could have equipment similar to that in America! To buy tractors and other machines, money



is needed and money is scarce in Turkey. The few wealthy landowners have bought theirs from America, but these are only a drop in the bucket. So the government has decided to help the farmers in still another way. The Agricultural Bank of Turkey loans vast sums of money to cooperative societies to buy the necessary equipment. There is a cooperative society for a certain number of villages. Suppose our young farmer, Mehmet, wants to have his land plowed. He sends word to the nearest cooperative and for a small sum of money the tractors do the job for him quickly and efficiently. The cooperatives are planning to buy threshers and reapers and other machinery and thus enlarge their work scope.

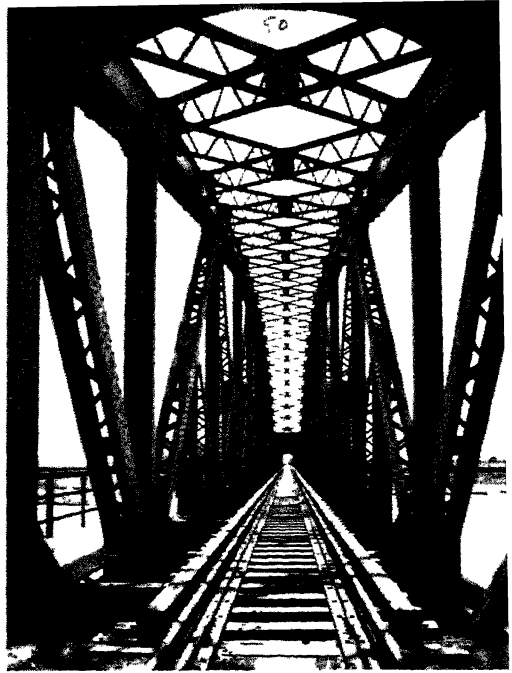
But that does not mean that Turkey is following the example of the U.S.S.R. and collectivizing the peasants. I am glad to say that my country has chosen the free way of America. These societies were formed with the sole purpose of furnishing modern machinery to the poor farmers who could not afford to buy their own.

In Adana, the fourth largest city of Turkey, the government created a school and farm where cotton is grown. The aim of this school is to improve the quality of cotton and increase production. On the school land, American cotton seeds, known as the Cleveland type, are grown and then distributed freely to the planters. The native stock of cotton is also improved. Cotton production was very low at the start of the republic and we imported most of the textiles needed by the people. The Cotton Institute has not only increased production tremendously but sees to it that the sowing of inferior cotton seed is prohibited. The Agricultural Bank grants huge credits to the planters in an effort to encourage their work. Today, we grow more cotton than can be handled by our mills.

The government's post-war plans for agriculture include draining of swamps, irrigation and control of floods, which will be of great benefit to the country. If these measures are carried through, more land will be available for cultivation.

What of young Mehmet? He has grown older now, married a village girl and is busily working on his model farm. A happier man than Mehmet could not be found in Turkey. He still loves his wheat and his animals, and his children play with another lamb, as he used to. When they grow older, Mehmet plans to send them to the Village Institute and perhaps, if Allah is willing, to finish their education in America.

Now let us see what else the republican government is doing to help Mehmet and his children.



## *Factories, Schools and Other Reforms*

**W**E WERE in the midst of World War One. I was then a child but the following incident left its impression on my mind. Turkey, as I said before, fought on the German side. One of the German officers, whom we knew well, came to visit us one day and deposited a lump of sugar, carefully wrapped, in my mother's palm. We put the lump in a safe place and looked at it longingly. Sugar was too precious to be eaten.

During the war, there was no sugar to be had at any price; food was terribly scarce and rationed strictly. Most people lived on *bulgur*, cracked wheat, when they could obtain it or on bread which was made of everything but flour. It was also impossible to get clothing and stockings were a luxury. I still remember how my mother cut up her beautiful linen sheets to make underclothes for us children. People wore slippers with roped soles and stockings were so patched that they looked like crazy quilts. Cut off from

world markets, on which we had depended in the past, the Turks could not rely upon their factories, for they had hardly any to speak of. From needles to machinery, we had been in the habit of buying everything from European countries.

Although we had raw silk and plenty of wool, all our materials came from England, France and Italy. I remember my mother telling me that when father bought a new house, somewhere on the Bosphorus, he ordered all his furniture, his linen and silver from England, everything but the rugs. Grandfather also bought all his suits and shoes from an English store in Istanbul. That was long before I was born and English goods were considered the best in the world.

We had reached a sad state of affairs indeed when one considers that in almost every European country and in America industrialization was in full swing. You with your colossal industrial output and your thousands of factories can scarcely realize what it meant to live in a country where practically nothing was manufactured. It was not only inconvenient and bad for the country but it also hurt our pride. We began to develop an inferiority complex.

And yet in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its political power, industrial and agricultural production was large enough to cover the needs of the whole empire. Our exports, at that time, always surpassed our imports. We shipped a substantial quantity of manufactured articles and our imports consisted solely of luxury goods.

But, as I have said before, decline set in, both politically and economically, and by 1860 Turkey was a semi-colony of Europe, depending on foreign goods and foreign capital for her livelihood.

To give you a better idea of the work done by the republic I will cite only one set of figures. I know statistics are awfully dry and very few people ever remember them, but sometimes they are essential. In 1913, there were 200 small establishments, more like workshops, in the whole of Turkey, employing some 17,000 people! And about 70 per cent of these were engaged in food production.

When the new republic was declared in 1923, the country was in a bad way. The successive wars had completely ruined us, the treasury was empty and we were further saddled with an enormous debt—the Ottoman Debt, which the Sultans had incurred by borrowing freely. The republic had to pay back this debt and most of our revenues were swallowed in this fashion.



Aerial railways are used in the Ereğli-Zonguldak coal district

As I have said before, public utilities, railroads, our mines and business in general were in the hands of foreigners. Prior to the republic, the only big purely Turkish bank was the Agricultural Bank founded in 1885. The Ottoman Bank, made up of foreign capital, was the state bank of Turkey and was the sole establishment which had the monopoly of the note issue.

With hardly any money, a nation poor, weary of war, and lacking in business ability and technical skills, the government started to lay the foundation of a national industry. Kemal Atatürk declared:

“Our aim is to raise Turkey economically as well as in other ways within the shortest possible period, and through rational ways bring her to the level of the most advanced country of the world.”

But how to lay the foundation of a flourishing industry without enormous capital? One way would be to borrow money from the wealthy countries of



In the Woodworking Shop at the Gazi Institute,  
a vocational school for boys in Ankara

Weaving on a hand loom





Students repairing a piano at the Conservatory of Music

the world. But with the Ottoman Debt still to be paid and the fear that borrowing would make us dependent on other countries, the government did not even attempt a foreign loan. We were going "to be fried in our own fat" as the Turkish expression goes.

During the first ten years of the republic, industrial development was mainly confined to private enterprise. How else could one do it? you might ask. Hadn't America built her industrial empire solely on private capital, without government help and on individual initiative? But Turkey was in an entirely different situation, due to past mistakes and privileges granted to foreign countries, and also because she lacked the ready money. Despite these drawbacks, the republican government did its best to encourage private enterprise, by granting free land to build factories, suspending taxes on newly erected plants and mills and abolishing duties on imported machinery and raw materials. During these ten years of trial, the state built only new military factories for the defense of the country and reorganized the existing



A modern factory

ones.<sup>\*</sup> Among the new plants established by the state is the Kayseri aircraft factory which builds fighter and commercial airplanes, importing the engines and instruments from abroad. The state also established the first sugar factory in 1925. Today there are four of them supplying two-thirds of the country's requirements. During World War II, although sugar was rationed, people could get a minimum amount, thanks to the output of these new sugar factories.

Thus by dint of encouragement and hard work a Turkish industrial system was finally started and in 1933 there were about 1,400 industrial concerns in the country. Although this was a remarkable achievement, considering the lack of capital and other hindrances, it was not great enough to meet the country's needs. To enlarge business, more capital was needed. Despite the fact that the republic was now firmly established and we had friendly relations with many countries, the state was reluctant to borrow money. The only other way, then, was for the government to take a hand in industry. The state was the only capitalist that counted and government



One of the many cotton mills built by the Republic

revenues would be used to enlarge and encourage our national industry. This meant, of course, an increase in taxation and a heavier load on the already burdened Turkish people. But as there was no other alternative, and as the government believed that industrialization was essential not only to increase agricultural output but also to insure Turkey's independence, the first Five Year Plan was adopted in 1934.

That name, Five Year Plan, has an unpleasant ring in many ears. But Turkey's Five Year Plan did not mean that henceforth private enterprise was to be banned. This was not a political move to enforce communist ideology; it was simply the only way to boost our much neglected and backward industry. The state henceforth would build and run most of the large factories, work the mines, run our public utility companies and our railroads. Certain products, such as tobacco, salt, alcohol, matches, etc., became government monopolies and were an added source of revenue to the Treasury. Private capital would still carry on side by side with the state and be encouraged as of old.



The Five Year Plan included five main groups of industries. Almost two-thirds of the capital allocated for the execution of the plan was absorbed by the cotton and textile industry and the installation of an iron and steel plant. The country's pressing need was for cotton yard and piece goods, worn by the Anatolian peasants. Four textile plants were built, two of which were constructed by experts from the U.S.S.R. and two by German ones. These produce about one-third of Turkey's needs in cotton yarn and piece goods. The iron and steel plant at Karabuk was installed by a British firm. Other factories built and operated by the state furnished us with paper, cardboard, rayon, silk, glass bottles, porcelain, woollens and hemp. The state also produces most of the semi-coke and runs the coal mines. Thanks to this Five Year Plan, industrial production increased five times and part of the country's requirements of textiles, sugar, steel, glass and paper were met by Turkish factories, a feat which was hailed not only by our leaders but by the Turkish people as well, despite the fact that they had to tighten their belts.

While you in America were enjoying the luxury of light taxation before the war, Turkish people have been paying high taxes for many years. No income, however small, is exempt and no personal allowances are given even for married couples. A small bonus is granted for each child to government employees. Taxation is on the pay-as-you-go basis and at the end of each month taxes are deducted from salaries. Business and professional people pay at the end of the year. As government salaries range from \$40.00 per month upward and private salaries are about the same, in some cases lower than \$40.00, the numerous tax deductions form a great hardship. Besides the regular taxes, we have also been subjected to indirect taxation on transportation, amusement and there is even a stamp tax on each check that is written!

The first industrial exposition which opened in Istanbul attracted unprecedented crowds. We were all eager to see with our own eyes just what the country was producing. As we walked through the vast halls and lingered over textiles, silks, stockings, leather goods, shoes and many small articles useful to the housewife, our astonishment was boundless. Yes, we were proud to think that the objects we looked at were made in Turkey and by Turks, and for a time we forgot that our purses were light indeed.

I shall never forget with what pride I visited our large cotton textile mill in Kayseri when I toured Anatolia a few years ago. The Kayseri cotton mill is the largest in the whole Near East. I first heard about the wonders it had

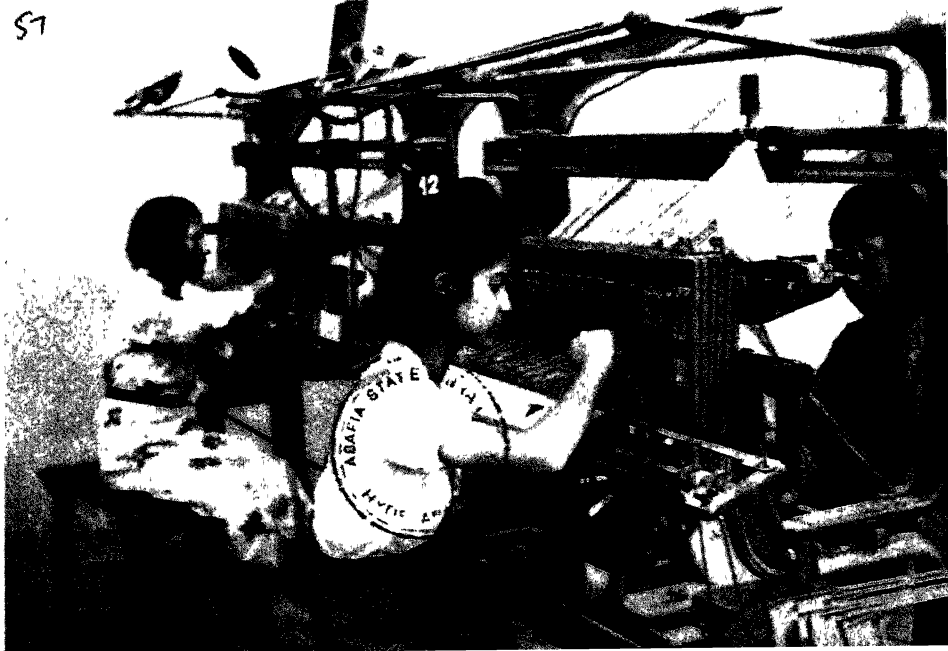
accomplished through the hotel keeper at Kayseri, where I spent a few days. He was much intrigued because I was travelling alone in Anatolia with no apparent objective in mind save to see the country. Most of the women on the road were going either to join their husbands in military or civil posts or to take up a job. Even now, a Turkish woman simply does not travel for the joy of going places. First of all it is not done, and secondly many people cannot afford a luxury trip. The hotel keeper was talkative and he chattered along about his city. He said:

"Allah bless these factories. If it were not for them what would we poor tradespeople do? You see how crowded the hotel is? Well, a few years ago the *djins* were playing ball in my place."

He went on to explain that Kayseri seemed a doomed city after the Turko-Greek War. There was a period of great poverty and lack of work. Then the government built the airplane factory and later the huge cotton mill and money flowed once again in the city.

The mill was situated at the outskirts of Kayseri, an imposing array of modern stone buildings. The director was a young man, as the republic believes in putting younger men in responsible positions. In the spacious and comfortable room where I talked with him hung two immense photo-

Threading a loom in a modern factory





*A MAP showing*  
**TUR**  
*and its neighbors to the*



graphs, one of the first President, Kemal Ataturk, and one of Ismet Inonu.

The workers in the mill were employed in three shifts, to fill the pressing orders for cotton goods, so that the place never ceased humming. The workers were of all ages, young boys and girls and bearded elderly men. The government had built two large apartment houses, one for the women the other for the men, where the workers lived. These had all the modern convenience: shower baths, central heating, reading and recreation rooms. This luxury was stupefying to some of the peasants. The director told me laughingly that one of the men kept turning on the electric switch to see the room blaze with light. He was fascinated by the glow of electricity and could not understand how a small white button could work this miracle.

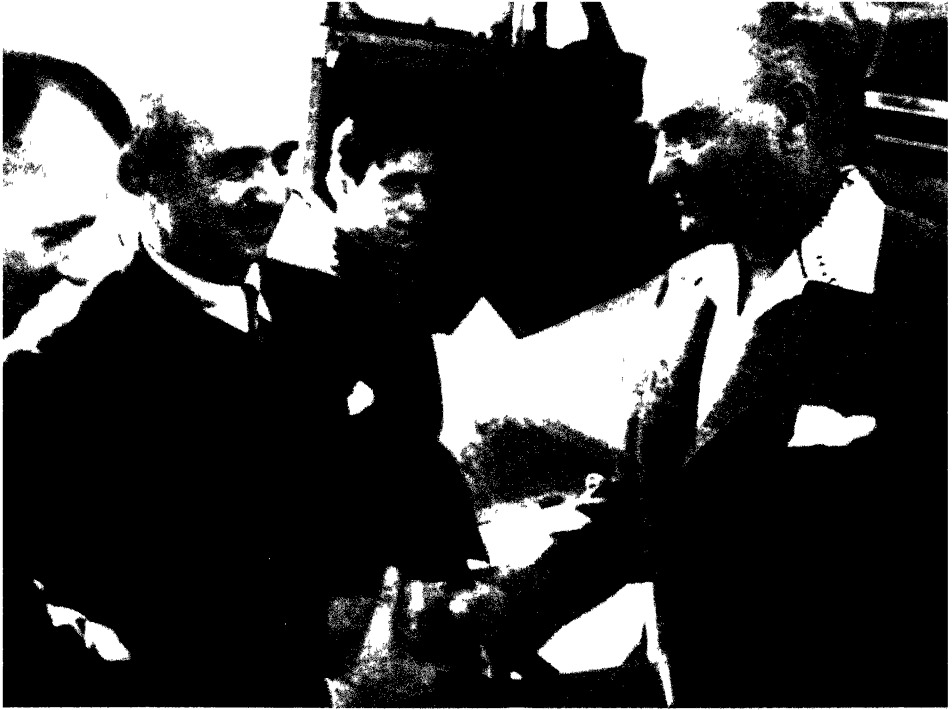
A large stadium provided recreation for the workers. There the young men played football and rode their bicycles, the young women preferring horseback riding and tennis. A small dispensary was attached to the factory where workers were treated free of charge.

I was taken through the buildings and watched with surprise the hundreds of machines, the majority of which had come from the U.S.S.R. and Germany. Everywhere men and women were busy at work. The women were stubbornly silent at first although they eyed me with great curiosity. They were clearly baffled and far from dreaming that I too was a Turk. When I started to talk in Turkish, their amazement knew no bounds. Finally the ice was broken and a young girl answered my questions shyly. I asked her if she liked working in this place.

"Oh, yes, I do," she replied. "My parents are poor and there are several children to feed. I help them as best I can. Besides, I like working and here we have so many advantages."

"A blessing it is for us women, my daughter," an elderly woman broke in. "We women have always worked. Now our hands bring us money. It is better than digging the soil for a crumb of bread."

The industrialization of Turkey has had far-reaching results. The new factories are providing work for thousands of men and women who otherwise would face appalling poverty. They are also absorbing most of our raw products, thus encouraging our farmers. The cotton worked in the Kayseri mill is grown in Adana. The factories are also centers of education and enlightenment. The village youth learn how to work, dress and live as the city people do. Cleanliness, fresh air and good food gradually transform the undernourished village youth into a healthy citizen. Men and women are mingling freely and old ideas of segregation are gradually passing away.



Kemal Ataturk shaking hands with Ismet Inonu, present President of Turkey

The workers do not have the right to organize into unions or to strike. It is claimed that, since the state runs the factories, the workers cannot strike against the government. There is a labor board which settles differences between employer and the workers, and recently the working hours were reduced from ten to eight. It is to be hoped that the Turkish workmen one day will be able to organize unions, as has been done in many countries of the world.

At the same time that the government was erecting our new factories, it was also embarking on an ambitious plan of road, bridge and railroad building. During the last years of the Ottoman Empire, the country was lacking in good means of communication, for the existing roads had been neglected and new ones not been built. Roads and railroads are important not only to connect industrial centers with ports but for the defense of the country. The achievement of the new republic in the transportation and construction lines is equally amazing. In fact the people call the new repub-

lic the "Railroad Government," because of the thousands of miles of track which have been laid down throughout Anatolia. Today Turkey has a railroad system of some 5,000 miles, and 25,000 miles of highways were constructed, together with 100 new steel and cement bridges. The old regime had left us 105 bridges, most of them several centuries old and unsuited to heavy traffic.

I remember a hair-raising trip I once undertook from Ankara to Changiri, a small town close to the new capital, in a so-called "bus," really a springless truck converted into one. We bounced merrily over some of the bad roads and every bone in my body ached. Finally we came to an old wooden bridge over a small stream and started to cross it when we heard a loud tearing noise and one of the wooden planks gave way under the pressure. The driver jammed on the brakes and the passengers started to pray. We drew back cautiously. Then all the men got out and together with the driver repaired the bridge by adding a few new planks. That done, we crept over the unsteady structure cautiously, expecting it to give under us any moment. But the good old bridge did not let us down and we reached the other side in safety.

Wooden bridge and bus in Anatolia



It was not enough to clothe, feed and provide work for the people, their general health had to be improved as well. Malaria, tuberculosis and infant mortality were threatening the nation, plus the people's ignorance and suspicion of doctors.

Under the old regime the few hospitals and dispensaries had limited budgets and were under the control of the municipalities of the different provinces. The peasants did not go to these or to see a doctor as a rule. What did doctors know? They had cures passed down from generations which they thought were far better than any medicine prescribed by the doctor.

One of the first acts of the new republic was to create a Ministry of Health in 1920 and all questions of health henceforth came under the jurisdiction of the newly created ministry. A vast program to better national hygiene, stamp out diseases and lower infant mortality was adopted. Small-pox was eliminated by requiring every child in school to be vaccinated. Typhoid, in like manner, is being wiped out and as soon as a few cases break out everyone is obliged to be inoculated. The poor people can get their inoculations free in the municipal health center.

But the greatest menace to health is malaria, which incapacitates thou-

Students in college laboratory





sands and kills many each year. To fight this dread disease, swamps were drained, mosquitoes were exterminated and the peasants told that mosquitoes carried the germs and must be killed. Many of the ignorant peasants thought that night air gave them the fever and chills and so slept with all the windows closed even in summer. The government also distributed free quinine in the stricken areas. An Institute for Malarial Diseases was founded in Adana where young doctors are trained and where many of the gravely sick are taken care of. The Ministry of Health also opened new hospitals and dispensaries training municipal doctors to work among the peasants. An excellent school for nurses was also founded, a profession which since has become very popular among Turkish girls. The Institute of Bacteriology at Ankara is not only training young scientists but making serums and vaccines for the country's requirements.

Speaking of health, I must also mention the "Drop of Milk" organizations founded in many of our cities and towns. These are really baby clinics where babies are weighed regularly, X-rayed and treated for diseases, and where mothers are taught how to take better care of their infants. Many of them distribute free milk to needy mothers. Our women doctors and young nurses have done excellent work in these clinics and, thanks to their efforts, infant mortality has been greatly reduced.

Some fifty years ago one could see boys of fourteen or older wearing turbans over their fezzes and calling themselves Hafiz, or Learned. It indicated that the boy had learned the Koran by heart and could recite it from cover to cover, an extraordinary feat of memory which went by the name of education. The boy could certainly recite the Koran but as a rule he did not understand a word of what he said, as the Koran is written in Arabic.

The Ottoman Empire's schools known as *medresses* had been famous in the past. These were religious institutions and the pupils wore *chubbes*, full black robes, and turbans on their heads. With the decline of the empire, the medresses also deteriorated and ceased to perform a useful function. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the first secular schools were opened in Istanbul and other large cities. It is true that these new schools still emphasized the teaching of the Koran, the history of religion and the study of Arabic and Persian, but they also had courses in mathematics, geography and the sciences. Institutes of higher education, the Medical School of Istanbul and the Military Academy date from that period. But the medresses were allowed to remain open and they flourished side by side with the new schools.



Young children playing in a modern nursery school

In 1924 all these medresses, or religious schools, were abolished and education became entirely secular, which means that religion is not taught in any of the schools whether Turkish or foreign. Education is compulsory for boys as well as girls, and free. Coeducation was accepted in the primary and higher grades and for the first time boys and girls studied side by side. Only the professional schools, for obvious reasons, are not mixed. A Turkish child starts school at about seven years of age and goes through five years of primary education during which he studies the same subjects as you do here in America. Some of the well-to-do families send their children to kindergartens, which are private. After five years a child then attends the secondary schools for three years and upon graduation enters the lycee, the normal school or the vocational school. Lycee graduates, if they so desire, finish their education at the university.

All state education is free. Charge is made only when a student boards in the school. Let us say that an Anatolian girl attends a normal school in Istanbul and lives at the school. Upon graduation she owes the government

for her board. Instead of paying this in cash, she teaches in any school assigned to her by the Ministry of Education, receiving a regular salary like the other teachers. In this manner the state has been able to find teachers for remote villages where many people would not want to go.

Of course there are not enough schools for all, although hundreds have been opened. But by instituting two shifts in some of the schools most of our boys and girls have been assured a good education.

The technical and professional schools are extremely popular as increased attention is being paid to the necessity of preparing students to earn their livelihood on leaving school. I visited the Ismet Inonu Institute at Ankara where some 200 young girls were receiving a thorough training in sewing, tailoring, hat making, cooking and other professions. The dresses, suits and hats made by the students were later exhibited once a year and the fashionable ladies of Ankara bought them eagerly. It is really a wonderful school, very up to date and with a high standard. Here the girls not only learn a profession but also receive a good education. When I visited the school, there were five Arab girls studying there who had come all the way from the Near East. The technical schools for boys are very important, for they are

A cooking class in the Ismet Inonu Institute in Ankara



turning out the skilled labor which we lack and which we must have.

There are also a few foreign schools, the best known among them being the Robert College for Men and the American College for Girls, both in Istanbul. These two centers of learning have given the country some of its most energetic and active leaders. During the reign of Abdul Hamid, Turkish girls were forbidden to attend the American College, although a few girls did so in secret and with trepidation. Today the majority of the students in both Colleges are Turkish.

Speaking of education, I would also like to mention briefly the *Halk Evi*s or People's Houses, which are to be found in all our cities and large towns. These are cultural centers and were founded in 1931 to give general culture to the people, supplement the work of the schools and also to create a stronger community life. The larger buildings are equipped with classrooms, lecture halls, a library, an auditorium and even a restaurant with excellent meals at reasonable prices. The members have the opportunity of listening to good lectures, excellent music and following courses they like. The young people who are artistically inclined are encouraged and trained in music, painting and other branches of art.

A sewing class at the Institute in Ankara, the best vocational school for girls



The members pay nothing for these privileges, as the Halk Evis are supported by the state, although contributions from members are accepted. They correspond to your recreational centers though the emphasis is not on diversion but on education.

How would you like to be governor for a week? If you are a Turkish child you may be one, as the government is encouraging Turkish children in civic education. For one week every year, the school children take over the local government of all the provinces. Boys and girls are elected as governors, mayors, police chiefs, etc., and perform the functions of these officials while their elders watch them closely to see that no mistakes are made, and so train the youngsters in the art of government.

Turkish children have a day set aside for them, the 23rd of April, known as Chochuk Bayramı or Children's Day. On that day thousands of school children meet at the huge auditorium at Ankara where they parade and take part in all kinds of athletic events while their fond parents watch them from the stands. Girls in gym suits, their hair cut short, their legs bare, march erectly, and I must add that they are applauded more than the boys.

Even in olden days the Turks were great lovers of sport, especially archery, horseback riding and wrestling. For five centuries Istanbul has had a famous archery ground, the Okmeydani or Bow Field. It was not reserved exclusively for archery but all sorts of athletic bouts were practiced there. Near the Okmeydani the hostel of the Company of Archers was erected, which had halls for meetings and for exercise, a library, a museum, accommodation for trainers and coaches and a free restaurant. Thirty-four archery grounds, modelled after the one in Istanbul, were formed throughout the Ottoman Empire. The Company of Archers had its own laws and the sheik or senior of the Company was something like the president of a sports club of today. The names of the champions of archery were inscribed on a special register. To claim the title of champion an archer had to shoot 600 yards!

Wrestlers and other athletes had similar organizations in the Empire. Wrestling is just as popular today as it was in the past and there is no wedding, public gathering or festival where a wrestling match is not staged. Horseback riding also continues to be a favorite sport among the Turks.

Some fifty years ago two young Englishmen, members of a family long established in Turkey, started to teach the Turks how to play soccer. Today it has become the national game. Teams from neighboring countries regularly visit Turkey and these matches attract considerable interest. Tennis likewise was introduced by the English, while the American Colleges taught

the Turks the delights of baseball, volleyball and basketball. With its vast coastline, Turkey affords a great many opportunities for water sports such as yachting, swimming, rowing and fishing. A few years ago only one or two Turks had ever donned a pair of skis, today there are more than 5,000 enthusiasts and the skiers usually go up Mt. Olympus in Bursa for this winter sport.

Each year when school opens every child is registered at the neighboring elementary school, given notebook and paper and left to drift into the intricacies of learning without much ceremony. But it was not so in my father's time. The first day of school for my father was marked with pomp and ceremony. I heard about it when I was a child and I shall tell you the story just as I heard it from him years ago.

"There were no lessons that first day when I went to school," my father told me. "It is a day that I shall never forget."

My father when he was a little boy lived with his grandparents, as his father was then in exile. Grandfather Assim was the Court astrologer. He gazed at the heavens long and pensively and declared that Ekrem was to go to school when he reached the age of five years, seven months, three days and eight hours! That was the auspicious hour. Never mind if the date fell in April when the school year was drawing to a close, during the middle of the week at the early hour of seven.

On the date thus set by Assim Efendi, preparations were started. Ekrem's father sent him a new suit from Paris. It had real trousers that came to his knees, and a coat. Ekrem had never seen the like before, because most of the boys in the neighborhood were poor and wore long cotton shirts, something like a man's nightshirt, and wore suits only when they grew up.

Ekrem was awakened very early in the morning. His grandmother helped him to get into his new Parisian suit. On his head they laid a new red fez, the color of poppies growing in the fields. Right in the middle of the fez was a large diamond, the biggest the family owned. A little after six there was a commotion in the narrow street and the singing of children could be heard distinctly. Little Ekrem rushed to the window. A magnificent procession greeted his eyes. First came his future fellow students singing a song of welcome. In the middle was a prancing horse, with a rich harness and blue beads woven into his mane. And finally came the dignified teachers, hodjas in flowing black robes and snowy turbans wound about their fezzes. The procession had come to fetch the new pupil and escort him to the school.

Grandfather Assim lifted the little boy on the horse where he was held securely by a manservant. The children led the way, their cotton shirts flapping about their thin legs. Back of Ekrem walked grandfather and the teachers, while the janitor carried reverently the flat cushion grandmother had made for her grandson. Those were the days when children sat on cushions in the schools, as there were no chairs, and used their knees as a table when they wanted to write.

The procession marched slowly down the cobblestoned street. Here and there a wooden lattice was lifted and a woman's voice was heard saying:

"Here goes Assim Effendi's little grandson. May Allah give him an open mind."

The schoolhouse was a small, dingy building, but to Ekrem's eyes it had the magnificence of a palace. There he would learn how to read the books that filled grandfather's library and perhaps one day write poems as his father Namick Kemal did.

At the dot of seven the children were all seated on their cushions, with Ekrem occupying the seat of honor in the front row. After a short prayer the teacher opened his book and read the alphabet slowly, while Ekrem repeated after him each letter. Then the teacher closed the book and the children rose from their cushions. School was over for the day.

Grandfather Assim, who had kept in the background until then, now stepped forward. From his ample pocket he drew a small silken purse and handed this to the head teacher. In it jingled three golden "liras," the equivalent of fifteen dollars. To the assistant teacher he handed a golden coin, and the janitor had his share in silver; while to each little boy grandfather handed a shiny one-piaster coin and a bag of candy. One piaster, in those days was a small fortune for a child. No wonder the little boys dashed out in the street shouting with joy, their "nightshirts" flapping in the breeze!

Little Ekrem was once more hoisted on the horse and rode home in great style, where his grandmother was waiting for him eagerly.

Today the children walk to school, even on their first day, carrying their lunch pails. But there is no music, no procession to mark the auspicious day, the first day of school, which made such an impression on my father.



## *Ramazan and Candy Festival*

*E*VERY Turkish child looks forward to Ramazan and Sheker Bayram (Candy Festival), for the latter, especially, is our most joyous religious holiday. Ramazan is the sacred month of fasting and the ninth month of the Moslem calendar, determined, in the past, by the sighting of the new moon at Bursa. During that month every good Moslem is supposed to refrain from eating, drinking, or smoking from dawn until sunset. "Not a blade of grass is to cross the threshold of one's lips," as the saying goes, and a good Moslem has the fortitude to follow faithfully this rigorous regime for a whole month, regardless of the weather.

But why should children look forward to Ramazan, a month of sacrifice and abstinence? Because they do not have to fast like their elders, and they can take part in the feasting and the festivities that last till the wee hours of the morning.



What children like best, judging from myself when I was a child, is *iftar*, the time when the cannon booms and the traditional tray is set before the hungry abstainers. The iftars at my grandfather's house, where we used to go often during Ramazan, have lingered in my memory all these years. Grandfather, himself, did not fast, nor did the numerous relatives who lived with him, except my Little Aunt, who was a devout Moslem. And Little Aunt's Ramazan trays used to be loaded with delicacies to tempt not only a child but an epicure as well.

We used to arrive at grandfather's house, situated on a hill overlooking the Bosphorus, sometime in the afternoon. In the spring one could smell the wistaria from the foot of the hill long before the rambling white house came in sight. The brown wooden door was flung wide open and near it sat grandfather's night watchman on a stone seat. He got up as we approached and saluted us with a welcoming smile. The door led into grandfather's gardens, for there were several built-in terraces, the topmost with a giant pine tree spread out like an immense umbrella. From that terraced garden one could watch the meandering Bosphorus with the rowboats and sailboats on its blue surface.

Grandfather's house was always crowded with relatives, old retainers and guests. It was a noisy, jolly household but everyone in the house stood in awe of grandfather, who loved order and discipline, as a general of the Turkish army should. He was my maternal grandfather and the only one I knew, for my father's father, Namik Kemal, had died long before I was born.

We found the younger members of the family gathered in the big hall. Little Aunt usually slept during the latter part of the afternoon. She was weak with fasting and tired after her morning activities, which she insisted on continuing regardless of Ramazan. If it was a good day, grandfather was out walking over the hills back of the small village. It was his favorite form of exercise, now that he was old. About four o'clock Little Aunt woke up and then the house quivered with expectation for the hour when iftar would be served. Little Aunt prepared the food tray in private down in grandfather's *kiler*, a room where all the food was stored. One of the menservants was dispatched to the village bakery to buy the hot *pides*, a sort of flat round bread covered with delicious small black seeds, made only during Ramazan. Soft inside, though baked thoroughly, and brown inside, the pides had a flavor that no bread could equal. Besides pides we always had *simit*s. A simit is like a big pretzel but no pretzel could hold a candle to our simits. During Ramazan, the special pastry bakeries made *yagli simit*, simits with



The harbor of Istanbul at sunset

plenty of butter kneaded with the dough, quite different from the ordinary everyday kind we used to buy. Some of these delicious rings were plain, others covered with plenty of sesame seeds, so fresh and crisp that they melted in our mouths. Little Aunt bought hers from a famous bakery in Istanbul, where people from all over the city, rich and poor alike, bought their simits at least once during Ramazan.

The tray ready, but out of our reach, Little Aunt and the whole family gathered on the balcony to watch for the first flash of the gun announcing that we could eat. That last half hour was the hardest to bear, not so much for Little Aunt but for the children, who could visualize the tempting little saucers of delicacies she had set out generously on the big round tray.

With the first boom of the cannon, which echoed and resounded throughout the hills, everyone shouted that the gun had gone off, as if the others had not heard the noise. And then we ran out in the big hall where the iftar tray lay in all its glory on the table. Everything was arranged temptingly and

with taste. The black and green olives in little mounds, the homemade jams, the slices of spiced meats and the hot pides cut in little squares, and the simits.

Little Aunt was the first to break her fast by eating a black olive. Olives and dates are the food the Arabs eat in the desert, as they did when the prophet Mohammed fasted and lived. Hence most Moslems like to break their fast by eating either an olive or a date. After that our Little Aunt sipped a steaming bowl of soup, lingering over each spoonful. The rest of the family, those who had not fasted, fell on the jams and cheeses to eat their fill, while Little Aunt watched us with a smile on her lips. Sometimes grandfather would emerge from the seclusion of his room and join us. Not to eat, for he highly disapproved of eating between meals, especially such "trash" as pides and simits which he considered indigestible.

"Stuffing yourselves again!" he would say disdainfully. "You are all spoiling your appetites for dinner."

We smiled sheepishly and our jaws ceased moving for a while, but we soon resumed our eating. Who cared about the rebuke and the loss of appetite? Ramazan came only once a year and the tray, with its tempting tidbits, was far more attractive than the excellent dinners served at grandfather's house.

Grandfather, though not a believer in fasting, kept open house during Ramazan, as did other wealthy families. Elaborate meals were prepared and the table groaned with food, while relatives and friends from far and near ate under one roof. And out in the kitchen the poor of the village had their table and ate their fill and blessed Allah.

After dinner was over, prayers said, and the people rested, the fun started. The streets of Istanbul were gayly lighted and so crowded that if one dropped a pin it would not fall on the ground. Every minaret in Istanbul was illuminated. Little glass jars filled with oil, with a small wick floating in the middle, hung from the balconies and these were lighted one by one at night and turned our beautiful city into fairyland. Today the minarets are lighted by electricity. The theaters and amusement places could not handle the crowds, and there were special *Karagoz* shows (shadow pictures) which were very popular, especially with the children. The big coffee house echoed with the strains of Turkish music. These were packed with men who smoked, pulled on their *narghiles* and drank cup after cup of coffee to make up for what they had given up during the day.

At sunrise, the night watchman beat on his drum to awaken the fasters for *sahour*, the last meal till the following evening. At grandfather's house

everyone except grandfather got up for sahur, even the children. Little Aunt had carefully set aside, in round copper dishes with festooned covers, the food to be eaten at dawn. There were beureks, cold meats, hot soup, vegetables, pilaf and desserts. The crowd gathered in the dining room, sleepy at first but gradually waking up to chatter and laughter as guests and relatives fell on the food again.

"Allah save me, it looks as if you had done all the fasting and I all the eating," my Little Aunt would tease us.

By then the food had lost all its attraction for me, but I would not have missed the gayety of sahur even though my eyes closed despite my efforts to keep them open. But if my mother told me to go to bed, I opened them wide and pretended that I was not sleepy. Long before the end of the feasting, most of the children had fallen asleep and had to be carried to bed. But that was part of the fun of Ramazan and no one minded. As I snuggled in bed I could dimly hear the gun booming again to announce that there would be no more eating for the fasters until iftar time.

Sheker Bayram followed Ramazan immediately. There were special watchers posted at Bursa and surrounding villages to watch for the new

The mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent in Istanbul, floodlighted from below



moon, and when the faint crescent was outlined in the sky messengers were rushed to Istanbul to announce, amidst rejoicing, that Ramazan had ended and we could celebrate Candy Festival. And what a holiday it was, and still is, despite the changes that have taken place! Everything is closed tight for three whole days. Not even newspapers are printed, except one put out by the Red Crescent Society, our Red Cross.

Sheker Bayram, as the name implies, is the time when candy rules supreme. Perhaps all this sweetening is to take the bitter taste of fasting from our mouths. Everyone eats candy from early morning until late at night and it is the one time of the year when children are allowed to gorge themselves on *lokoum*, Turkish paste, and other sweetmeats.

The last days of Ramazan, just before the coming of Bayram, are very exciting. That is when all the candy to be used during the three-day holiday is bought.

In my childhood, mother used to hire a carriage and take us along for the all-important shopping expedition. We went first to Mahmoud Pasha, the shopping district of old Istanbul where the poorer people buy all they need, in contrast to the Pera district where the best stores are located. But at Mahmoud Pasha one can find the kind of material and handkerchiefs used at Sheker Bayram. It was the custom in the old days to present gifts to all the servants, usually material for dresses, slippers and stockings for the women, while the men were given cotton shirts, socks and handkerchiefs. We found all these in the small shops that leaned upon one another up the steep hill called Mahmoud Pasha. Handkerchiefs, large cotton ones, dainty Bursa silk ones, we bought by the dozens, for these were given to everyone who rang our door bell from the night watchman to the children of our relatives and friends. Many families still celebrate Bayram in this old-fashioned way.

But best of all was our visit to the famous Hadji Bekir candy store, known all through the country for the excellence of its candy. The original Hadji Bekir was an Anatolian peasant with a gift for making candy. He came to Istanbul years ago and opened a small shop in a small dingy cellar, as he had not the money to hire a better place. Down in the bowels of the earth, he fired his immense copper cauldrons and turned out candy that soon brought to his door the wealthiest families of Istanbul. Hadji Bekir prospered and grew wealthy; the fame of his candy spread as far as Egypt and throughout the Balkans. His son who succeeded him enlarged the business, opening many other shops, but he still kept the original store close to the Galata Bridge because he believed that his good luck would leave him if he



A little girl with a kerchief wound around her head

ever abandoned his father's little place. It was a tradition in our family that the Bayram candy was to be bought from the original Hadji Bekir store.

But thousands of others had the same idea, and the crowds not only jammed the store but spread out in the street. We waited our turn, sniffing the delicious odor of fresh candy and craning our necks to have a glimpse of the famous store. The son of Hadji Bekir had left it just as he had taken it over from his father. The big copper cauldrons still stood in one corner,

though now the candy was made in another place across the street. At one end stood the wooden counter and on it were lined big glass jars with brass covers, jars filled with an infinite variety of candy glistening with freshness. There were *lokoums*, a soft sweet paste cut in rectangles and dusted over with fine powder. Some of the paste was stuffed with pistachio nuts, with almonds or hazelnuts; others were plain, flavored with rose, or chewing gum obtained from the chewing-gum tree. Then there were jars of candy-covered crisp almonds, and other candied nuts; hard candies of numerous varieties—white bergamot, strawberry and rose, orange-flavored with tiny bits of the peel showing through; cinnamon and coffee-flavored candies, each with its distinct shape and color. No artificial flavoring is ever used at Hadji Bekir. And all these mouth-watering candies were lined on the counter for all to see and buy.

Hadji Bekir is also famous for his courtesy and kindness. During ordinary days, when a customer goes to the shop, one of the men in attendance always offers the newcomer a piece of lokoum. The lokoums come in large squares and are cut on a board with a sharp knife, back of the counter. That is a tradition at Hadji Bekir's, together with the glass jars, the brass covers and the multicolored pieces of cotton wound about the waist of the men who serve in the shop.

We bought extravagantly for the holidays. The cardboard boxes rose on the counter in impressive array and we children sagged under the load as we took our precious boxes to the carriage waiting for us at the door.

The night before Sheker Bayram, my mother wrapped all the gifts in separate squares of cotton material and we children took them to our cook, our manservant and the maids, who thanked us by saying:

"May you live long, *kuchuk hanoum* (little lady), and may Allah grant you a handsome husband."

After dinner, my mother arranged the Bayram candy tray, an operation closely watched by the children. We always used the big silver tray, on which were placed two bowls, our best cut-glass ones, one in which we put the lokoums, the other containing the hard candies and other varieties. Six of our best glasses were lined in a row in front of the candy containers. These would be filled with water early in the morning. Naturally, while mother opened the boxes, we children had to sample the candies to see if they were good.

Bayram morning we woke up earlier than usual and each wore a new dress for the occasion. Before we were through with breakfast, the night

watchman arrived with a crowd of urchins following him. One of the men with the watchman was beating on the drum loudly, so we could hear the steady thump, thump of the big drum long before we saw the men. Another carried a long pole on which were hung dozens of colored handkerchiefs which had been given to them by other families. The cook came out with the kitchen candy tray and the men each ate a piece, drank a glass of water and then were given the colored cotton handkerchief bought for that purpose, with a golden coin tied in one corner. Next came the postman, our bread man, the street cleaner and our ambulant merchants. All of them ate our candy, drank our water, and to each we presented a large cotton handkerchief with money tied in one corner. They wished us a "happy, sacred Bayram" and went their way.

Guests started coming early in the morning. With the first arrivals, out came the big silver tray and each person took a piece of candy and drank some water. We would have been insulted if they had refused our candy! Coffee followed immediately after. It was a game with us children to waylay our fat maid, Eleni, as she came out of the parlor, and pounce upon the tray. With her hands full she was absolutely helpless and we could take all the lokoums we wanted. Not that it was denied to us, Allah knows there were many unopened boxes still in the kiler. But the candy we extracted by force from our dear Eleni always tasted better.

Just as visitors came to see us, we too went out calling on our elders. Grandfather's house was our first stop. There we kissed the hands of our elders, all the aunts and uncles gathered for the event, and each one gave us children a silken handkerchief. Sometimes if we were lucky we found a silver coin tucked in one corner. The candy tray was brought out for us too and we stuffed ourselves with lokoum and almond candy.

How gay were the streets of Istanbul during Bayram! Children dressed in their best fineries, girls in long light-colored silk dresses with white kerchiefs over their heads, the little boys in their best suits and red fezzes, walked about or thronged the amusement places. Swings and merry-go-rounds were set up in empty lots, where the children, for a modest piaster, could spin around contentedly. Parting with another piaster, they could ride in the long wooden carts that had crude boards for seats but were decorated with streamers. The carts had no springs and they rattled furiously and uncomfortably over the streets but the children loved the ride. When thirsty, they would stop to buy a drink from the lemonade man. Dressed all in white, the man carried a magnificent brass container filled with sweet





An elderly peasant with a turban-like covering on his head



This peculiar headdress is worn by some of the women of Anatolia

lemonade with round brass discs that jingled merrily as he walked and shouted:

"Ice-cold lemonade, good for the health. Who wants a glass of my refreshing lemonade?" In one hand he held two glasses which he clicked together. He rinsed these carefully and filled them with lemonade from the long spout in the container.

Late at night the merry-makers and the visiting throngs turned homeward, tired but happy. Children were fast asleep in carriages, clutching their handkerchiefs in their hands. The first day of Bayram was over, but there were two more days of feasting and visiting.

Sheker Bayram is our one religious holiday and is somewhat like your Christmas, except that gifts are only given to the retainers and the poor and never exchanged between members of the family or friends. The birth of the prophet Mohammed is not celebrated in the same way as that of Christ. It is a day of religious thanksgiving, when all the minarets are lighted up at night and a special kind of simit is made to celebrate the event. People go to the mosque to pray, and it is rather a solemn event.

There is another Moslem holiday called *Kurban* Bayram, or Sacrifice Festival, which lacks most of the color of Sheker Bayram, just described. On that day every good Moslem is supposed to slaughter a sheep at his house and give most of the meat to the poor. This is a symbolic holiday celebrating the delivery of Isaac, who was saved by an angel presenting a sheep to Isaac's father, Abraham, who was about to sacrifice his son to God. The Moslems believe in the Old Testament and revere the old prophets as you do. They all recognize that Christ was a prophet. But to the Moslems their prophet Mohammed was a man, the messenger of Allah; he was born and died like any other mortal.

In the past the markets of Istanbul would be thronged with sheep a few days before *Kurban* Bayram. Each animal had a red splotch of paint on its head, thus marking it for sacrifice. Some families bought several sheep and it was the custom for the head of the family to slaughter these in the garden, although many people had butchers do the job. The sheep thus sacrificed were supposed to carry each good Moslem over the bridge, narrow as a hair, that leads into Paradise. Those whose sins are light can cross the bridge, but imagine a man loaded with sins crossing that bridge of hair! *Kurban* Bayram is a solemn affair with many prayers read before the sacrifice. It was the day when all the poor of Istanbul went from house to house to receive the meat of the sacrificed sheep. As my family did not slaughter

sheep at home, we used to buy a good supply from the butcher and distribute this meat to the poor who came to our door. As Kurban Bayram lasts four days, it is a holiday awaited eagerly by the children, who have fun in the swings and merry-go-rounds.

Republican Turkey still observes these holidays, although much of the color has gone out of them. Religion, though, no longer has the tight hold on the people, due to the many reforms introduced by the government.

For instance, during Ramazan some fifty years ago, no good Moslem would dare eat, drink water or smoke in public. Everyone had to fast and those who did not were discreet enough to keep that fact to themselves by eating in the privacy of their homes. Today fasting depends upon the individual and no one stops a man for not fasting. The Moslem religion in the past controlled our thinking, our habits, the way we dressed and even the workings of the government. No law could be passed, war declared or a peace treaty signed without the consent of the Moslem clergy.

But Islam was not founded on tyranny. When the powerful Arabic Empire flourished, there was free discussion and great tolerance and the clergy were an unimportant class. To be a Moslem five things are essential: (1) To believe in one God and that Mohammed is his prophet. (2) To pray five times a day. (3) To fast once a month. (4) To go to the pilgrimage at Mecca once in a lifetime. (5) To give one-fortieth of one's property to the poor. The priests in the old days led prayers in the mosques and performed other functions, but never interfered in one's private life or the workings of the government.

Religion, as our prophet conceived it, is a matter between Allah and the individual. When Mohammed was preaching the doctrines of Islam in his native Arabia, a gaunt nomad, an unbeliever from the desert, came to see the prophet and asked him: "Oh, Mohammed, tell me, who is a good Moslem?"

And the prophet replied, "A good Moslem is he from whose hands and mouth no one else suffers."

At that the Arab kissed the prophet's hands and accepted the religion he offered.

Gradually the Moslem hodjas began to grow stronger and assumed more power. The Sheih-lus-lam, the head of the Moslem clergy in Turkey, was the only man who could depose the Sultan lawfully by religious decree.

Selim the First, the great conqueror and one of the most powerful rulers we ever had, was once talking with his Sheih-lus-lam. The Sultan, in the

course of the conversation, said jokingly that he would never go against the dictates of religion. At that the turbanned hodja answered severely:

"If you did, I would depose you immediately."

Selim, the mighty ruler of millions, bowed his head and said nothing.

In the hands of a great man, the position of Sheih-lus-lam served as a check on the power of the Sultans.

But with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, corrupt men occupied that position and they were mere slaves of their rulers. The hodjas, steeped in ignorance, not only kept the country backward but became petty tyrants over our destinies. Take, for instance, the seclusion of women, so rigidly enforced in the past, especially by the fanatical hodjas. When Mohammed lived, the Arab women were not secluded and there is nothing in the Moslem religion to condemn women to a life of restriction. Mohammed had high regard for women. He said, "Paradise lies beneath the feet of a mother." But the hodjas twisted the religion the way they wanted to.

When the republic was founded the Sultanate was abolished, but the Caliph, or Moslem Pope, was retained for a while. The heir to the Osmanli throne was elected Caliph and lived in Istanbul. He no longer had temporal power, for he was not Sultan as well as Caliph.

The Caliphate was allowed to exist for a short time because it was felt that to abolish the position sacred to millions of Moslems would arouse resentment and anger not only in Turkey but throughout the Moslem world.

But it was clear that the Caliph was being tolerated until the people were prepared to see him go without much objection. Ataturk in many of his speeches discussed the problem openly and tried to explain to his countrymen that the Caliphate was a liability to the nation. Turkey, he persisted, was not interested in uniting all the Moslems under one leader. Consequently, on March 3, 1924, the Grand National Assembly adopted a law abolishing the Caliphate and banishing members of the imperial family from Turkey. The royal family left the country quietly; not one of them was harmed or persecuted. The Turkish revolution in all its aspects was devoid of bloodshed and terror. Its aim has never been the extermination of one class, even the ruling class; rather the enlightenment of a nation, not by force but through education.

With the Caliphate abolished, the *tekkes*, the houses where the dervishes gathered and prayed, and the *turbes*, where our rulers and prominent men are buried, were closed. There were many dervish orders; the most famous were the Mevlevis, or "Whirling Dervishes." The dervishes were not monks



The Mevlevi Dervishes of Konya. Seated on the rug is the Sheik.

The young men in white are novices

and did not lead a segregated life. They gathered in the tekkes only for special ceremonies, the Mevlevi whirling gracefully to the tune of reed flutes. The tekkes were closed because the government believed they had become centers of fanaticism.

At the same time all the medresses, or religious schools, were closed and education is no longer under the dominion of religion.

In Turkey's new constitution was the sentence which read, "The religion of the state is Islam." This sentence was later struck out because it was argued that the state could have no religion and individuals were free to choose theirs. In this way state and religion were separated, and a Turk is now free to adopt other religions if he so desires. As far as I know, no one

has made use of this privilege. In the past, it was unthinkable for a Turkish woman who was a Moslem to marry a Christian man. That simply was not done. Today I know several women who have not only married foreigners but whose husbands are Christians.

This does not mean that the republic is anti-religious. On the contrary, the Moslem religion has been purified of all the trappings which the hodjas added at will. The majority of the Turks still believe in the dictates of Islam and would not think of repudiating the faith of their ancestors. Only fanaticism and bigotry have been broken.

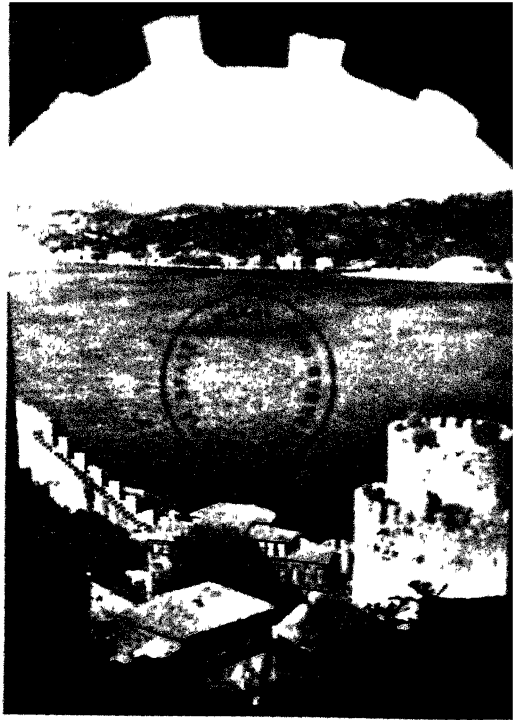
Five times a day the muezzin still climbs the minaret to call the faithful to prayer: "Allah is great, Allah is great; there is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet."

But today he chants the saying in Turkish instead of Arabic, and he no longer wears a turban and the black robes of a hodja, but a simple suit.

The faithful still gather by the fountains of the mosque's courtyard and wash their faces, arms and feet before entering the mosque for prayers. Washing is obligatory before prayers, and the courtyard of every mosque has numerous fountains for that purpose. The number of people who go to the mosque has shrunk considerably. How can a modern man stop his work several times a day to say his prayers?

As of old, the mosques are open to everyone all day long. No collection plate is ever passed around and our mosques have no pews. One can go in any time during the day or night, take off one's shoes, sit in a corner of some beautiful edifice to meditate, and then, when the time set for prayer draws around, say one's prayers quietly and alone and leave the mosque. The upkeep of the mosques and the salaries of the hodjas were handled by the Ministry of Evkaf, or Pious Foundations. Evkaf was very wealthy, for the Turks left large sums of money to this Foundation. Today there is a President of Religious Affairs, appointed by the President of the Republic, who has charge of the administration of the mosques and the appointment and dismissal of the mosque dignitaries.

There are still people who observe the sacred month of fasting, Ramazan, only the date is now set by the Observatory in Istanbul and not by watching for the new moon. People still eat the delicious pides and simits and in some houses the iftar trays grace the tables. And, of course, every child still munches candy during Sheker Bayram and still throngs the places of amusement. The motor car has replaced the wooden carts of my childhood, and on Sheker Bayram the boys and girls ride in American-made cars.



## *Istanbul, the City on the Golden Horn*

THE ancient city founded by Constantine the Great, which we call Istanbul, is the most beautiful and historic in Turkey. Once the capital of two great empires, the center of learning and art for centuries, it is still our principal city. Perhaps I am prejudiced, but to me it is one of the most beautiful places in the world.

It is best to approach it by boat early in the morning. The Prince's Islands, small pine-covered dots of land, guard the entrance to Istanbul. During the Byzantine reign they were mainly used by the emperors for their pleasure and also as prisons where imperial rivals or members of the royal family were exiled and imprisoned. Traces of those rocky and dark dungeons still exist. Today the islands are summer resorts where one can bathe in the warm waters of the Marmora, row or sail, ride the docile donkeys and eat the excellent lobsters which abound in the surrounding waters. It is hard to believe



that once these peaceful and idyllic islands were the scenes of dreadful murders and tortures.

As the steamer glides over the smooth surface of the Marmora and the islands recede into the distance, one can see Istanbul outlined dimly from afar, rising like a dream city through the mist that envelops her shores. The domes of the mosques appear to be floating in space, and the slender minarets resemble graceful figures wrapped in misty garments. The rays of the sun light up the dome of Aya Sophia, and the mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent appears to be built of pink marble. The red roofs of the houses and the windowpanes scintillate as slowly the mist clears and Istanbul emerges in all its beauty. It is built on many hills, like Rome, and the shores are washed gently by the Marmora, the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Everywhere one looks, one sees the deep blue waters, a setting which few cities can equal. The Marmora Sea narrows as the steamer approaches the harbor. On one side is Istanbul, on the edge of the European continent; on the other stretch Scutari and the Asiatic suburbs, each with its mass of gardens, fertile fields, vineyards heavy with grapes in the summer, and white houses characteristic of these rustic shores. These small villages are also summer resorts with excellent bathing facilities, plenty of fishing and hiking, if one enjoys these sports. At this point only a narrow body of water separates Europe from Asia.

As the boat draws closer to shore, the ancient land and sea walls that once guarded the capital of Byzantium rise in their ruined majesty. There are white marble palaces, ancient ruins and houses that stretch to the shores of the Marmora and flank the blue Bosphorus beyond. In the spring the green hills are covered with poppies, daisies, yellow flowers known as the "mule's hoof," and the blossoms of fruit trees. The cemeteries, with their tall cypress trees, add a patch of somber color to this gay setting.

Istanbul is a city of mosques and minarets rising on the many elevations like "ships at anchor." The old section, which is also called Istanbul to distinguish it from Pera and Galata, is connected with the more modern part by the famous Galata Bridge resting on pontoons. The harbor is crowded with steamers, rowboats, caiques and sailboats, the latter loaded with wood, charcoal, fruits and the many products of the Black Sea and the Marmora regions. The Galata Tower, built by the Genoese, who once had a colony in Istanbul, and the slimmer and taller tower of Bayazid stand guard over the city. Today they are used as watch towers, from which the first signs of fire can be detected. Fires have swept over the city many times, and the

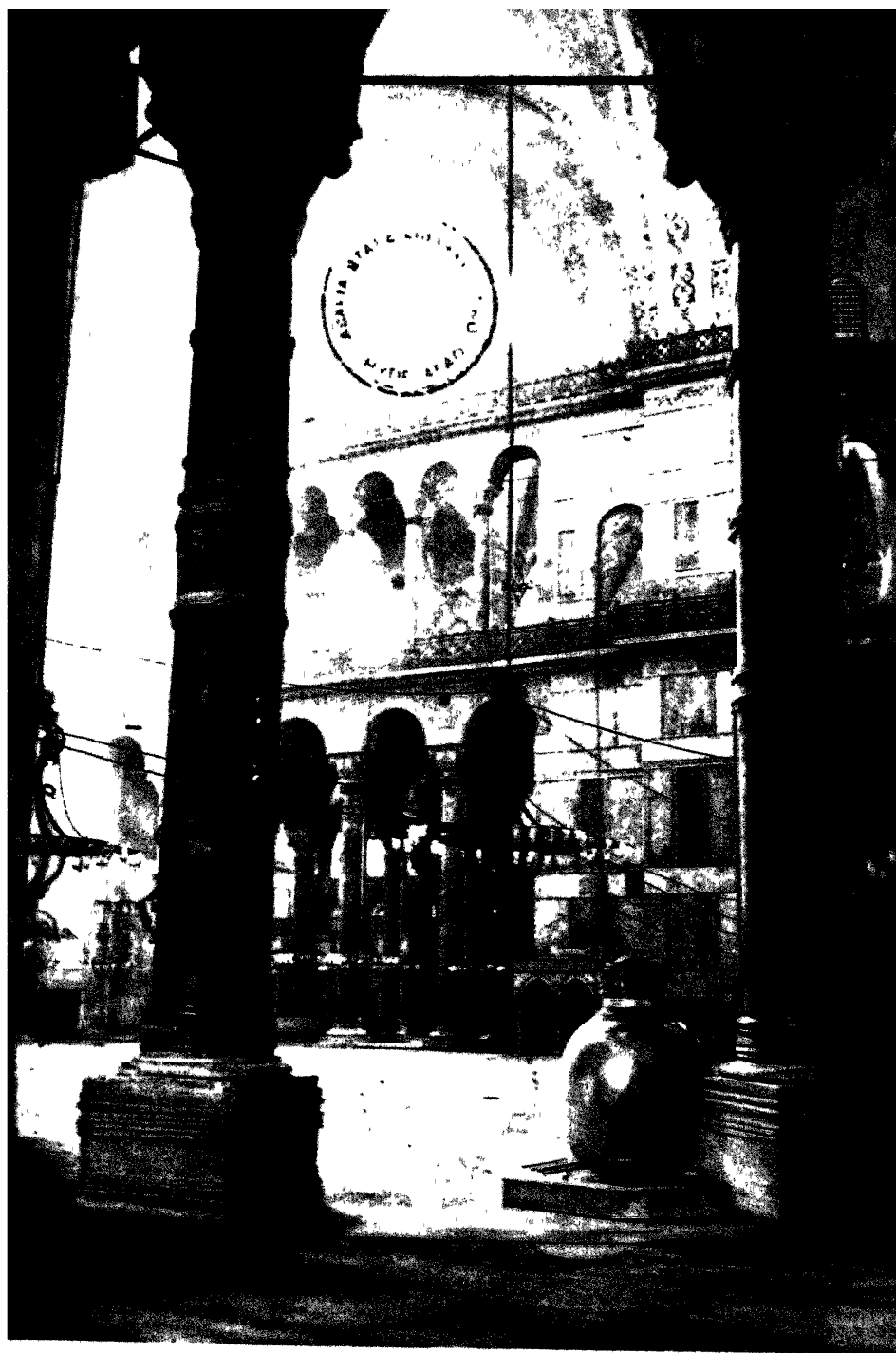
houses, being built of wood, burned like match boxes. In order to stop such disasters, the new houses must be built of stone.

Istanbul is not only famous for its beauty, but for its historic sites and ancient works of art which are still preserved and have survived wars, fires and earthquakes. It was the Rome and the Paris of the ancient world after Rome declined and when Paris was still a small village on the Seine. Evidence of that glorious grandeur still remains.

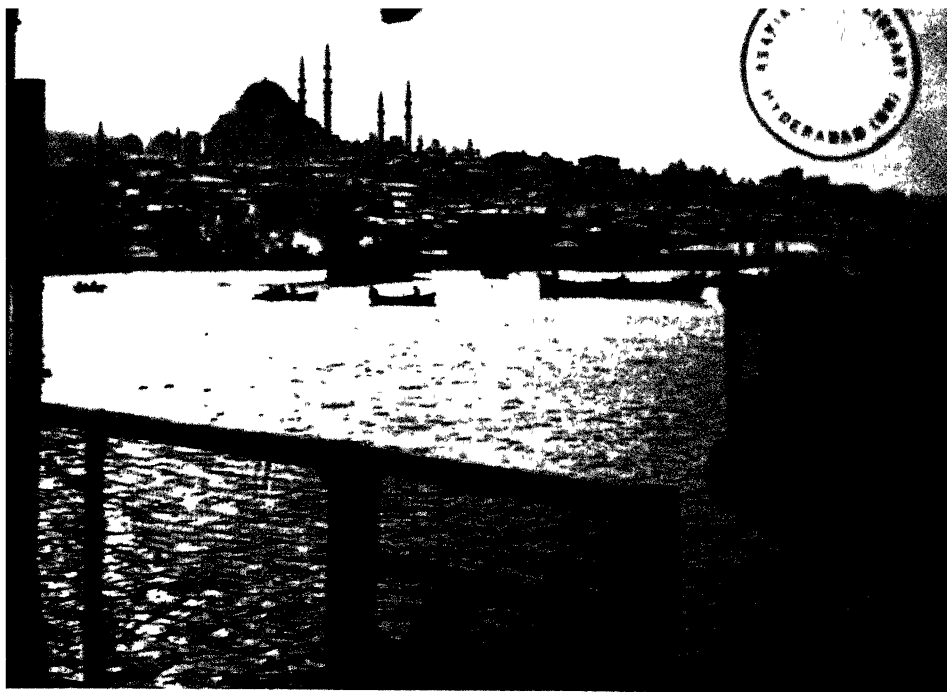
In the old section of the city stands the mosque of Aya Sophia, or the church of Santa Sophia, built by the Emperor Justinian and converted into a mosque when the Turks conquered the city. The square, where the mosque and other buildings stand, used to be the hub of Imperial Byzantium, for here once stood the Emperor's Palace, the Senate House and the Hippodrome. The emperors could look down from their palace windows to watch the gory games staged for the amusement of the populace. Santa Sophia, where the Byzantine emperors were crowned, was the center of innumerable parades and pageantry, and the eyes of the Christian world focused on its marbles, its gold, and the mosaics covering the walls and the beautiful dome. The wealth of an empire was lavished on this masterpiece which used to awe the foreign emissaries who came to the court of Byzantium. The mosaics, which had been whitewashed by the Turkish conquerors, as images are forbidden in a place of worship, have been uncovered, thanks to the tireless efforts of an American, Professor Whittemore, and his staff. The whitewash preserved the mosaics and they are as beautiful as they were when Sultan Fatih rode into the city at the head of his Janissaries. The republican government decided that Aya Sophia should no longer be used as a mosque and turned the noble edifice into a museum.

Across from Aya Sophia stands the mosque of Sultan Ahmed, or the blue mosque, as it is called. The whole interior is made up of beautiful blue tiles and the sunshine pours in from the many windows. Sultan Ahmed built his mosque to rival Aya Sophia, and he used to give donations to the faithful to pray in his mosque. It has six graceful minarets that can be seen for many miles. The clergy objected, for the only other mosque with six minarets is at the holy city of Kaaba. The Sultan ordered a seventh minaret erected at Kaaba and kept the six at his own mosque.

On a hill overlooking the Golden Horn rises the mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent, the most beautiful in the country. The great Turkish architect Sinan erected the mosque. Suleiman and his favorite wife, Hurem Sultan, a slave girl called Roxalane, whom Suleiman married, lie buried in

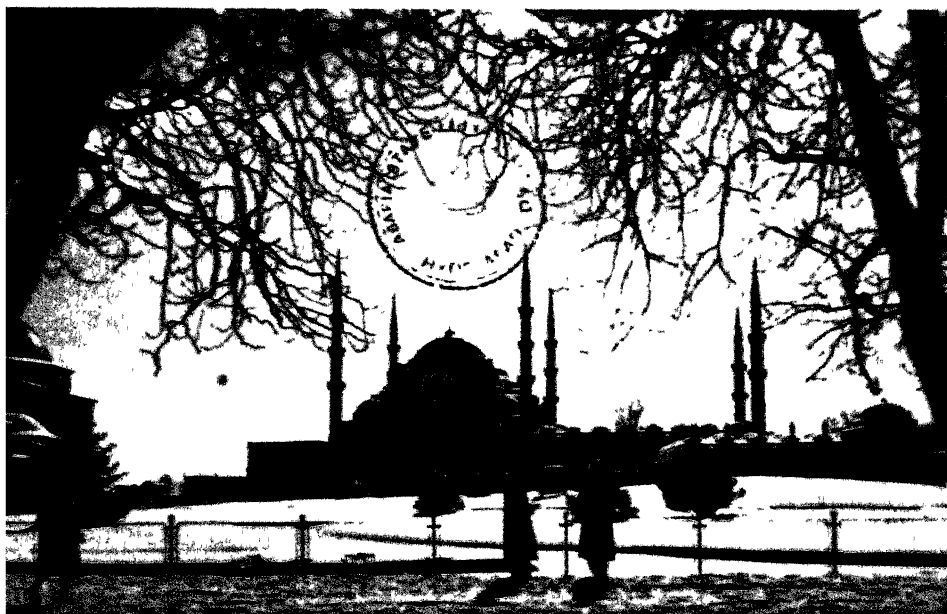


The interior of Santa Sophia in Istanbul



The Golden Horn and the mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent in Istanbul

The blue mosque of Sultan Ahmed



the small *turbe* close to the mosque. A little farther on stands the Evkaf Museum, once part of the numerous buildings connected with the mosque. The museum houses Turkish works of art.

The architect Sinan erected four minarets surrounding the mosque, two of them having three balconies, the other only two. When the mosque was inaugurated, the Sultan asked Sinan why he had not built three balconies on all of them. And Sinan answered:

"Count the balconies, your Majesty."

His majesty counted and found out that there were ten in all, and Suleiman is the tenth Sultan in direct descent from Osman. The Sultan was much pleased with this idea and heaped more honors on Sinan.

The most fascinating place in Istanbul is the Seraglio Palace where the Sultans of old resided. It is built on a point that juts into the Sea of Marmora, called Saray Burnu, or the Palace Point. Surrounded by stout and high walls, the palace is a conglomeration of numerous buildings, each one representing a different period of Turkish architecture and each more beautiful than the other. At the Seraglio, the Sultans lived with pomp and luxury, closely watched over by their faithful guards who manned the walls day and night against a sudden attack from the rebellious Janissaries. In the Audience Hall the foreign ambassadors were received and stood in awe before the majesty of the Sultan and the wealth so lavishly displayed. When Poland was first partitioned between Russia and Prussia, the imperial Turkish government did not recognize this violation of Poland's independence and the Polish ambassador was always received at the Sultan's court, together with other emissaries.

In the Harem lived the imperial household, hundreds of women, children and slaves, guarded by the eunuchs. The Head Eunuch was one of the most important personages in the court and his influence was vast, although he was originally an African slave brought into Turkey. But there is no color discrimination in my country, and Negroes, after slavery was abolished, were enrolled in our army as officers and occupied important civil posts.

The palace gardens were famous when Ahmed the Third ruled as Sultan in the eighteenth century. His reign is called *Lale Devri*, or Tulip Time. Thousands of tulips were planted in the gardens, and at night the Sultan's favorite pastime was to watch tall and slim maidens, dressed all in white, toss golden balls to one another, while hundreds of tortoises, with lighted candles stuck on their hard shells, meandered slowly among the tulips.

Ahmed the Third was a poet, an artist and the patron of the arts. During

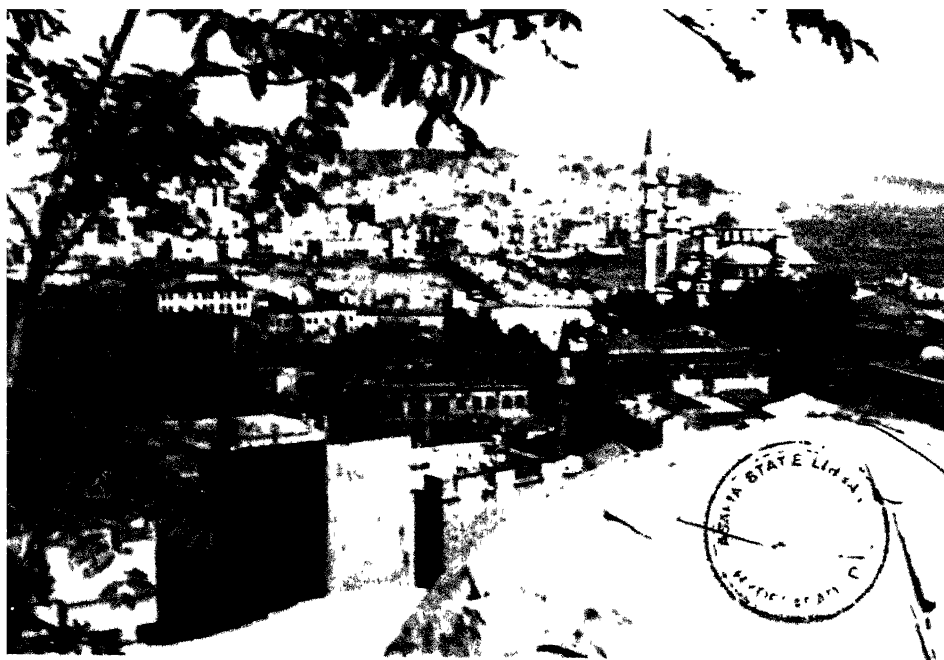
his reign the poet Nedim lived and wrote some of the most beautiful verses in all Turkish literature. The Sultan and his favorites took to the imperial caique, a large rowboat decorated with gold, ivory and mother-of-pearl, and wandered over the Bosphorus to the Sweet Waters of Europe, a small stream which empties into the Golden Horn. While music played and the poet Nedim recited his latest masterpiece, Sultan Ahmed reclined on his throne of brocaded cushions and toyed with his amber beads. It was the same Sultan who appointed one of the palace officials as *shukufedjibashi*, or chief of the flowers.

The Seraglio Palace is now a museum and it contains, among other things, a collection of porcelain from China which is said to be the largest in the world. Hall after hall of what used to be the dining room of the guards is lined to the ceiling with priceless china which different Sultans had ordered for their personal use: dinner plates, platters, vases of all sizes, cups and saucers representing some of the most beautiful porcelain ever to come out of old China. In several glass-topped cases are cups and saucers incrustated with precious stones.

Not far from the palace used to be the barracks of the Janissaries. One can see today huge cauldrons, blackened by many fires, in which food was cooked for these soldiers. When the Janissaries revolted against the Sultan, they turned these cauldrons upside down and beat on them with big wooden spoons. To "upturn the cauldron" meant to revolt.

Together with its mosques, works of art and beautiful fountains, Istanbul also has its apartment houses, shops and theaters and the modern conveniences of any European metropolis. There are many people who deplore the fact that the ancient city on the Golden Horn has lost its old splendor, its color and its charm.

Perhaps the city is a bit frayed at the seams. It is no longer the seat of government, so it has lost the power and splendor of old. It is not even the busiest port of the country. The modern sections, such as Pera and Taxim, would awake no enthusiasm in a foreigner who comes to Turkey to see the "exotic East." The city is indifferent to all these criticisms. Let the fleeting visitors find her streets a little unclean, her plumbing inferior compared to American bathroom splendors, her shops rather dingy and her famous bazaars devoid of the treasures that avid tourists from all over the world, as well as antiquarians, have bought. Let them come and go. It is not for them that Istanbul will appear at her best. One has to live there to appreciate her charm, the beauty that lingers in her crumbled stones, in her many resorts



Looking over the rooftops of Istanbul, with the curved dome  
of a mosque in the foreground

and quaint villages stretching to the Black Sea, and her incomparable sunsets. Although Istanbul is modern, the people still retain many of their old customs and there is beauty and color for those who have eyes to see.

As the sun rises, the crowing of roosters and the shrill whistling of the night watchman give way to the call of the street vendor. The ambulant merchants still roam the streets of Istanbul as they did in the past, each advertising his wares in his own peculiar way. The vegetable man with his chant-like call is a melodious alarm clock, for when he lifts his lusty voice at break of day and cries out: "Fresh squash, the flower still blooms on its nose. Cucumbers, tender as fresh almonds. Who will buy my cucumbers?" every Istanbul child knows that it is time to get up.

The aristocrats among the vendors own a horse, while the humbler ones carry big wicker baskets held on the back by means of two stout straps made of cord, through which the arms are passed. There are also other containers, depending on the goods sold, and these range from bread, meat, fruits, vegetables to ice cream and kitchen utensils. The bread man has two

large baskets slung over his horse and he delivers the hot fragrant loaves to one's door. Melons, some deep green, others yellow in color, rise in small mounds in wooden carts drawn by two sleepy horses. A melon cut in half rest on top of the pile, deep orange in color, to tempt the customers. As for the candy man, with his glass container on top of his head, he is beloved by all children. Who can resist the roosters with magnificent tails made of red cinnamon candy, stuck on small sticks, which the man peddles through the streets? These candy roosters are not made by the famous Hadji Bekir, but to a child they are delicious.

Most festive of all are the vegetable men, those early risers who hold sway during the first part of the day. Two big baskets are secured on each side of a small horse, overflowing with the fresh vegetables grown in the truck gardens close to the city. The baskets are adorned in the spring with branches of honeysuckle, wistaria, or red poppies, daisies and the flower of the horse bean. Often flowers are tied to the horse's head and wave gently as the animal walks. Around the neck of each horse dangles a necklace of large blue beads. Some have blue beads woven into their manes, others into their luxuriant tails. The blue bead is supposed to preserve the wearer from the Evil Eye, a mysterious force which has the power to strike all living things as well as inanimate objects, and bring in its wake illness, misfortune or even disaster, depending on how the powerful Eye feels at that precise moment. But if one wears a blue bead prominently displayed, it is thought to attract the Evil Eye and save the wearer from an awful catastrophe! Infants have blue beads sewn on their clothes. When fezzes were worn, each boy had one attached to his red headgear. It is not unusual to see a motor car or a truck with a blue bead dangling from its radiator. The car may be the invention of the west and perhaps immune to the bad effects of the Evil Eye, but the owner does not believe in taking chances.

It is customary when admiring or praising someone or some object to say, "Nazar deymesin," or "Let the Evil Eye not strike," which is thought to counteract the effects of this jealous power.

But to go back to the vegetable vendor and his bedecked and beflowered animal and bulging baskets. As he ambles slowly through the streets, most of which are paved with cobblestones, the doors of the houses are flung open and the housewife or the cook appears, tray in hand. Even the well-to-do families buy from these ambulant merchants. And what a variety of vegetables they carry in the spring and summer! Purple eggplants, smaller and slimmer than yours, tomatoes, green peppers, green squash and a kind called



*asma kabak* which measures several feet in length. The men also sell ochra and artichokes, the hearts of which are as big as saucers but sweet and tender to eat. Other vegetables sold are horse bean (the pods are eaten while tender and the beans inside when big and mealy), several varieties of green beans, shell beans and peas, lettuce and radishes, not to mention those indispensable herbs to a Turkish cook—parsley, dill, fresh mint and scallions.

June is the month of strawberries and they are sold in small round wicker baskets. A sweet and fragrant kind grows on the hills behind the villages along the Bosphorus. No sugar is needed to sweeten them. The berries are picked late in the evening. They are carefully packed in the round baskets, the largest resting on the top. Some twenty baskets are hung on a thick pole which a man then balances over his shoulders. Every evening, while the strawberries are in season, one can see these men, trousers rolled up to their knees, feet and head bare, bringing their heavy loads to the city markets after having walked for miles to get there. As they pass by, the delicious fragrance of fresh strawberries tempts the appetite of all the passers-by.

I should also mention the nut vendors who are seen frequently in the summer. The Turkish people are very fond of fresh walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts and eat a great many of them. The walnut man, his hands black from shelling the nuts, carries his wares in a glass jar filled with water; the almond man, in a flat basket where the nuts rest on fresh leaves or cakes of ice. The outer green shells are carefully removed and the white milky nuts inside, covered with their thin yellow skins, are sold in the streets.

In the fall, the chestnut man and his small brazier appear in the city. He has a special brazier, small, round and with a wide cover in which are many holes. Charcoal is burned in this implement. When the coal turns into red-hot embers and the cover is piping hot, the chestnuts are put on top to roast. Autumn is always connected with the smell of roasting nuts and one can see the merchant and his brazier in almost every street of the city.

Vegetables and fruits depend on the seasons and Turkish people do not eat their summer or best vegetables all the year round. In winter, besides the inevitable cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, spinach and celery root, we eat dried beans, lentils, peas and horse beans cooked in numerous ways to give them taste. At best a dried bean is a dried bean and it is no wonder that people wait for spring with their mouths watering in anticipation. You here, in America, thanks to your frozen foods and vast communication system are not thus limited, but we in Turkey appreciated our spring and summer bounty the more because we do not have it with us all year long.

To welcome the coming of spring, the season of plenty, the Turkish people celebrate the first of May by going on a picnic. From early morning the streets resound to the tramping of many feet and the grinding of wheels, as families lug their food baskets to many picnic resorts. The Sweet Waters of Europe, the Prince's Islands, and the hills overlooking the Bosphorus afford delightful spots for the picnickers. A Turkish picnic is like a Southern barbecue and the supply of food is generous. But on the first of May it is the tradition to roast a whole lamb in the open and eat the first artichokes cooked in olive oil and top the many other foods with a milk dessert and the first cherries. Those who can't afford a whole lamb will, nevertheless, eat lamb in some form or another.

Not only have the ambulant merchants survived in modern Istanbul but the open-air markets are still doing a thriving business. There is a market every day of the week in different sections of the city. Market day, especially in the spring, gives rise to much bustle and noise and hilarity. Early in the morning the wooden carts rumble over the streets bringing the stands of the merchants. These are usually set up in a deserted yard but gradually invade the sidewalks and the street itself. Traffic is snarled, merchants and drivers get into a brawl, as a car or a carriage tries to force a passage through the stands.

One can buy almost anything in these markets, not only food but cotton prints, china, kitchen utensils, thread and needles and even secondhand clothes and shoes. The people of the neighborhood mill about the market from early morning till sundown. They come not only to buy but to look around and to chatter. Each customer carries a canvas bag which soon fills up. Small boys, with baskets on their backs, offer their services and for a small sum of money will cart a heavy load to your home. The merchants all know one another and laughter and teasing runs high. At noon, the butcher shops turn into open-air restaurants. Small braziers are brought from under wooden stands, filled with charcoal and lighted. Over the hot embers lamb patties are broiled which are then sold to the hungry merchants. The hot patties are put between two thick slices of bread together with chopped scallions or slices of tomatoes and make a delicious meal.

As the sun begins to go down, the merchants slash their prices. This is when the thrifty of the section appear, eager to secure bargains. The noise, if possible, rises in intensity.

"We are giving away," the merchants shout. "Come this way, Mr. Uncle. You can have two eggplants for the price of one. We are giving away."



An open-air market where everything is sold

The eggplants might have soft spots in them but the thrifty buy all they can. And often the good merchants will give freely to the poor of what is left over before they begin to pack their stands. The people of Istanbul still watch over their poor and even the humblest merchant is generous if he has made a good sale.

There is a section in Istanbul known as the Tin Village because the roofs of the huts are made of old rusted tins. Here some of our gypsies live, those who have grown soft and left their customary wanderings. The men make and repair cane chairs and raise chickens, the women peddle their wares in the streets. Other gypsies cling to their hills and roam about in their carts as of old and look down upon their brethren in the Tin Village. The wandering gypsy women go hunting for tender greens, aromatic herbs and flowers which they cart for miles into the city. The greens sold by the gypsy women are never found in our markets and they are considered a delicacy by the housewife. During spring, the gypsies bring to our doors



A corner of the famous Closed Bazaar of Istanbul

sweet-smelling lavender, linden blossoms, laurel leaves and aromatic herbs.

Even in the winter the hardy gypsies roam our streets and then their baskets contain wild misletoe and a prickly green plant with red berries. The gypsies, too, call out their wares in a rich sing-song voice, pronouncing the Turkish words after the fashion of gypsies.

"Lavender, lavender blossoms, who wants my sweet-scented flowers?"

The young girls sing out joyfully as they balance their baskets on their backs and walk with an easy grace. Many of them are slender and well-proportioned and good-looking with their deep black eyes and dark skins.

One of the most colorful sections of Istanbul is that which embraces the Fish Market, the Spice Bazaars and Mahmoud Pasha. Starting from Pera towards the Fish Market, one sees on the way "Step Street" which connects Pera with Galata. There is also a cable train, called by the Turks "Tunnel," which runs underground and on which people can ride the short distance for a small sum of money. But Step Street does the same job free of

charge, that is if one has the strength to venture up that steep hill part of which is built in steps. One of the Turkish chauffeurs, to demonstrate that his old model T Ford car could go anywhere, drove down Step Street to the consternation of the peddlers, who sprawl all over the place.

From Galata, one smells the sea everywhere, for the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus blend at that point. To reach the old section, we have to cross the Galata Bridge, famous not for its beauty but for the people who once crossed it every day. Arabs in their flowing robes, Circassians in their black fur hats and silver belts drawn tight over long black tunics, Albanians, Kurds, Lazes and other citizens of the Ottoman Empire, all in their different costumes, could be seen on the bridge. Toll is still collected from pedestrians as well as all vehicles, as in the past. Having paid our small coin, we amble slowly over the bridge, looking down at the harbor where boats are tooting and smaller craft jostling one another. It is a short walk over the bridge and now we are in Istanbul, the old section of which is being renovated considerably. Many of the old buildings and narrow streets have been torn down to make way for wide avenues. But the Fish Market and the Spice Bazaars still stand as of yore. One can hear the din of the Fish Market long before it looms into view. It is made up of numerous small streets and the smell of food, fish and spices come strongly to our nostrils. Are we inclined to buy some fish, and the very best is sold here, we wander to the section reserved to the fishmongers. A joyous voice beats on our eardrums:

"Hey, mashallah, fresh fish to buy, they have had their noonday meal in the sea!"

The many booths lie one on top of the other, each with its wooden tubs of fresh fish: *kalkın*, or button fish, so-called because of the buttonlike scales on its back; swordfish, *gelinçik* or "little bride," the name due to the tender and white meat, and many other varieties which one cannot find in America.

If we have had enough of the smell of fish, we wander to another section and come upon other booths packed tight with food. The place is humming with people. Here is a housewife attired in the old costume, the *tsharchaf*, watching the display of delicacies. There are tins of Russian caviar, smoked and cured roe covered with yellowish wax, slabs of the best Kayseri *pastırma* hanging from hooks on the walls. She ventures into the small shop. The owner greets her royally. One never knows what hides beneath a humble and rather worn *tsharchaf*. For all he knows, she might buy a whole tin of caviar! Alas, the woman is looking at the slabs of white cheese and

the olives in the glass jars. Still, she is a customer and the merchant hastens to serve her. The olives, he insists, are sweet and meaty. "Have one, Hanoum Efendi," and he lifts the cover and offers her a big black olive. Next she tastes a bit of the white cheese and deciding that both are to her taste, she buys some of each.

But we are being pushed about by the surging crowds and the many peddlers in the street. We can't stand gaping at the food stores any longer. A little boy, with a basket in his hand, offers us some round and much-polished lemons. "A very fountain of juice they are, Lady Aunt, and so cheap," he says. If we make the mistake of stopping, we will soon be surrounded by other little boys and older men and women, all pressing their merchandise on us.

The Fish Market wanders off in many directions each with its many small shops where wooden stools, brass and copper goods and other articles are sold. But now our interest centers on an old rambling building close to the entrance of the Fish Market. The door is wide open and, looking at the rather dim interior, we are tempted to walk in. This is the Spice Bazaar and the closed round-domed building is several centuries old. The heavy gate is open all day long and closed only at sunset when it is locked carefully for the night and watched over by a special watchman to protect the shops inside. Once in, the din of the Fish Market dies down. It is quiet in here, cool and restful and the smell of spices dominates the place, as the very stones have soaked it in for centuries. Here are small booths where old men sit silently and with dignity back of the wooden counters. These venerable men with white beards seem like apparitions from the past. No one tries to attract our attention or calls out to us. If we want to buy, they are ready to serve us. In front of them stand their jars and bottles where the spices are kept: black and red pepper, cinnamon, cloves, *kımyon* (a spice used to flavor some kinds of meat balls) and other products from the spice world. In one jar are odd-looking black pods and we learn that they are called *kechi boynuzu* or goat's horns. They look like horns and when cooked with sugar and water make a refreshing drink, favored by the older women who claim that it "purifies the blood." We look over other jars, each one containing something just as fascinating. Here are dried linden blossoms, adachayi, an aromatic herb, henna powder, chewing gum, aniseed and camomile, which one brews and drinks for stomach troubles.

At another section we come upon bales of cotton and see the merchants covered with the white lint, beating on it with a special instrument. It is like

an archer's bow with a strong wire rope attached at both ends. As the man works this implement, the cotton flies about whiter and fluffier than ever. These are the mattress makers, for Istanbul people still come here to order their bedding.

From the Spice Bazaars we wander to another section of the old city, where we find ourselves enveloped again in noise and much activity. This is Mahmoud Pasha, the steep hill that leads to the closed Bazaars where antiques, jewelry and rugs are sold. Here, too, peddlers, carts and motor cars all nose one another. The Mahmoud Pasha stores sell material of all kinds, china and kitchen ware and other articles. The merchants stand in front of their doors and if they see a likely customer, they cry out:

"Come this way, Lady Aunt, we have cotton prints, Bursa silk, material for every taste and every purse. You don't have to pay for a look."

In Turkey elderly women are addressed as "Lady Aunt" or "Lady Mother" and the men as "Mr. Uncle" or "Mr. Father" by the common people. It is considered a respectful deference to old age.

If "Lady Aunt" is induced to enter the shop, the merchant sets a chair for her and makes her as comfortable as possible. Shopping takes a long time at Mahmoud Pasha and if a customer is standing she might walk off to another shop where she will be treated better. Perhaps the woman has come to buy ribbon but the merchant brings down bolts of material of all colors and kinds.

"Look at this piece of silk," he says eloquently. "Don't worry, Lady Aunt, the dye is fast. Wash it and iron it all you will, this is the best Bursa silk we have. The price, did you say? Oh, that is easily arranged, the essential is that you like the silk."

The material, by then, is pulling at Lady Aunt's heart-strings. She pretends it is not to her liking. One must not be too eager to buy for the merchant will boost his price. The stage is thus set for the important tug-of-war called bargaining, which is a fine art at Mahmoud Pasha. The merchant shows her other material, bolt after bolt is unravelled before her eyes. Finally she decides on the first one shown to her but she objects to the price which, she says, is too salty, meaning too steep.

"I swear on my two eyes that the silk cost me more. Take it for nothing, but I can't sell it for the price you offer."

At last, after much talking, Lady Aunt and the merchant agree on the price and the man picks up his shears, saying:

"Gule, gule" (May you wear it with laughter). "And long life to you."



Old and new in Istanbul; ancient gravestones, modern apartments



The hill is long and steep and we are a little out of breath when we reach the Closed Bazaars, larger and more extensive than the Spice Bazaars. One could get lost in the maze of narrow streets that branch off in many directions, each street lined with small shops. This is the section where rugs are sold and the streets are covered with carpets of all sizes. Don't think that the merchants are honoring our visit to the bazaars. They have spread their new rugs for all to step upon, for it makes them look older and softens their colors.

Everywhere one sees antique shops where copper and brass goods, china, glassware from the whole Near East are exhibited. Some of them are beautiful while others will fool only a gullible tourist.

Modernity has invaded the bazaars, and side by side with the antique dealer's shops we see others selling cheap dresses, shoes, slippers, perfumery and other trinkets which the poor people of Istanbul buy. The prayer-bead and cigarette-holder shops are still fascinating as the owners drill the beads and holders with old implements right before our eyes. Amber, sandalwood and jasmine are favorite materials for cigarette holders, which are used extensively by the Turks. This long string of beads will make a beautiful necklace. They are real amber, so the merchant informs us.

And now we are hungry and thirsty, it was a long walk from Pera to Mahmoud Pasha. We could go back to Pera and have tea at some fashionable café, but we prefer to enter one of the shops where intriguing desserts are lined at the window. These are called *mahalebidü* shops and mahalebi is a milk dessert. The shop has small marble-topped tables and the man who waits on us is an Albanian. The Albanians of Turkey excel in this kind of sweetmeat. What will we have, there is such a variety to choose from? You may have *sutlach* (rice pudding) with plenty of cinnamon sprinkled on top; *kazan dibi* (the bottom of the cauldron), a milk dessert rich brown on top and white inside which is served with rose water; or *tavuk gogsu* (breast of chicken). The last does not sound like a sweetmeat, does it? It may not, but it is, and one of the best I know. The breast of a chicken is cooked thoroughly and shredded. The white meat is then mixed with milk and sugar and cooked until it thickens. It is served cold with powdered sugar and rose water if you so desire. The man brings us *tavuk gogsu* in small plates with odd-looking spoons tapering to a point. They have long handles and sharp edges and one finds these spoons only in these stores.

Before we leave Istanbul we must visit Eyoup, the City of the Dead, as the tourists call it. There we find one of our largest and oldest cemeteries.



The courtyard of the mosque at Eyoup

Eyoup was a distant cousin of the prophet Mohammed and one of the early converts to Islam. He was killed outside Constantinople, then the capital of the Byzantine Empire, when the Arabs were besieging that city. His grave was discovered and a beautiful mosque and turbe erected where he fell. The mosque and turbe still stand, and, before the Republic, the Sultans used to drive to Eyoup with great pomp where they were belted with the sword, a form of coronation in which the sword took the place of the crown.

We go to Eyoup by boat, one of the small ones that ply from the Galata Bridge to the villages along the Golden Horn. It is a slow and restful ride. We can see the city, the mosques and some of the old wharfs by the seashore.

At Eyoup, we walk from the boat landing through almost deserted streets until we come to the mosque. It has a very large courtyard with many fountains, and hundreds of pigeons are gathered here. Pigeons are to be found in the courtyards of almost all of the mosques. There are men selling bird seeds and many people buy a nickel's worth and scatter it to the birds.

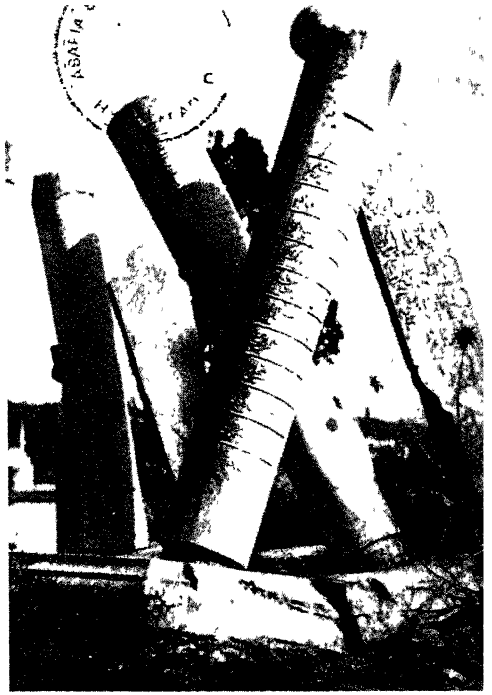
No wonder the pigeons are fat and sleek. Suddenly there is a whirl of wings beating in the air. We look up and see a couple of storks flying to their nests. Every year, at spring, people wait for the storks to appear. They fly in formation over the Golden Horn to their old nests in Eyoup. The stork is loved in Turkey for the bird represents the home and the hearth.

Another beautiful, and longer, boat ride is the trip up the Bosphorus. The boats are comfortable and fast and it is fun to watch the people. Here is a man in a white apron. He is the *kahvedji* of the boat and if you so desire will brew you a good cup of coffee or tea. There are many people who call him and give him their orders. Two hours on a boat seems long to some people who while away the time by sipping their favorite beverage. But we have only eyes for the villages that unfold before us, and the Bosphorus that curves in and out of green banks. We are now close to the Anadolu Hissar, an ancient tower and fortification built by the Turks. Another tower, bigger and better preserved, lies on the European shore of the Bosphorus. These fortifications once guarded the Bosphorus at its narrowest point. At Anadolu Hissar is the opening of the Sweet Waters of Asia, a small stream which empties into the Bosphorus. In the days gone by, one could not see the stream for the rowboats that dotted its surface. People from all over Istanbul came here, as it used to be a famous amusement resort.

Our boat races on towards another village. We see people out rowing, swimming and fishermen drawing in their nets. Porpoises are turning cart-wheels as they rush through the swift current.

It is late when our boat pulls to the Galata Bridge on our way back from the trip up to the Black Sea. The sun is setting and the sky is aflame with color. We watch the sunset silently. It is too beautiful to take in at one time and too magnificent for words to do it justice.

If you are fortunate enough to live on the Bosphorus, you can step out on your balcony on summer nights and watch the fishermen herring hunting. Branches tied in faggots are attached to the prow of the rowboat and they are lighted to attract the fish. As the boats glide silently over the darkened waters, the lighted faggots throw an eerie light over the Bosphorus. From back of the hills a full moon rises and casts a path of gold on the waters. As they return with their catch, the fishermen sing to the night. The lights of the houses along the Bosphorus blink wearily. A dog bays at the moon and the night watchman's shrill whistle startles the quiet night.



## *Turkish Legends and Nasreddin Hodja*

*M*Y OLD nurse, Allah rest her soul, knew a great many fairy tales and when she was in a good mood we could always work upon her to tell us one of our favorites. No matter how often we heard them, they never ceased to delight us, especially as she told her tales with many flourishes.

Winter was story telling time. After dinner, we children gathered in the upstairs living room where our porcelain stove would be roaring merrily. We sat on pillows, by the stove, watching the logs crackling busily while the flames cast a warm glow on our faces. There is something cheerful and reassuring about the hum of a wood fire and in this atmosphere of warmth we could always persuade my old nurse to tell us a fairy story.

"Which one shall it be tonight?" she would ask.

"Tell us about the Water Carrier and the Vezir's Daughter," we might plead.

Making herself more comfortable on her pillow, nurse started and this is the story she told, while we hung on her very lips not to miss a word.

#### THE WATER CARRIER AND THE VEZIR'S DAUGHTER

Once there was and once there was not. In the time before when the sieve was in the straw and the camel was a street crier and I was rocking my father's cradle, there lived a Padishah and his Vezir, each of whom had a daughter. They were both beautiful but the Vezir's daughter had also a good heart that shone in her face.

One day, as the two girls were seated at the palace window throwing the ball of conversation at one another, there came to pass that a handsome Saka, or Water Carrier, stopped by the palace underneath the very window where the girls were seated. Said the daughter of the Padishah,

"Saka, Saka, who is more beautiful, the Vezir's daughter or I?"

"Both of you are beautiful," answered the Water Carrier, "but, ah, for the Vezir's daughter whose beauty is as the fourteenth of the moon."

At that the Padishah's daughter was angry and her life was filled with gnawing jealousy. And one day she took to bed and pretended to be sick. The Padishah called in all the court physicians and the wise men, for he dearly loved his daughter. The young princess gave much gold to one of the physicians and said: "Tell my father that I shall only be cured if I drink the blood of the Vezir's daughter squeezed out of her heart."

The doctor, lured by so much gold, went to the Padishah and told him: "Oh, ruler of this land and of our hearts, your daughter will be well again provided you are ready for a great sacrifice. The breeze of good health will blow her way if she drinks the blood of the Vezir's daughter."

At that the Padishah's heart turned into a battlefield, as he loved his Vezir and he could not think of sacrificing his friend's only daughter. He pondered over these words a long time and in the end the love for his daughter conquered. He sent word to his Vezir and ordered him to kill his one daughter and send the blood squeezed out of her heart to the palace.

You can imagine how the good Vezir wailed and moaned! But he dared not go against the wishes of the Padishah. Finally his wife persuaded him to kill a cat instead and send the animal's blood to the palace. In the meantime, the Vezir ordered a walnut chest to be made, and putting his daughter into the chest, he took it to the Bazaars to sell it at auction. Just then the Saka was passing by: He saw the chest and bought it. Then he carried it to his house and left it in a room.

Early in the morning, the Saka left the house. The Vezir's daughter came out of the chest and fell to work. She swept the room, made the bed and towards evening went back into the chest and closed the cover tightly over her. When the Saka came home that night and saw that his house was clean as a rose, he was so surprised that he almost swallowed his tongue with astonishment.

"I wonder who came to this house today," he reflected.

The next morning he went to work and again the girl came out of the chest and tidied the house as before. Towards evening she hurried into her walnut chest. When the Saka returned and saw the room clean, he sat awhile buried in thought. Then he got up and said: "Whoever is in that chest, be it djin, peri (fairy) or of human blood, come out."

But there was no answer and he went to bed. In the morning he bought some meat and left it in the kitchen, saying to himself:

"If Allah is willing, I'll cook the meat when I return in the evening."

Then he rose and went his way. The girl came out again, swept the room, made the bed and started to cook the meat. While the meat was cooking, she rolled up her sleeves and started to wash the dirty clothes. The hours flew by and she was not aware of their flight. Suddenly the door opened and the Saka came in. And when he entered the kitchen, what did he see? A girl as beautiful as the fourteenth of the moon washing clothes! When the girl saw him, she covered her face with her arm, but he recognized her and said: "My Sultan, you are my Kismet and I am yours."

Then he gathered all his neighbors and calling in a hodja he married the Vezir's daughter.

Come time, go time, the Vezir's daughter began to long for her parents. She went to her Saka and told him she wanted to go back and see her father and mother. The Water Carrier agreed to let her go and sent her back with forty mules loaded with silver.

The Vezir's daughter was received royally by her parents. They feasted and rejoiced and blessed Allah for His kindness. The days came and flew by until the time set for her return. But the Vezir and his wife begged their daughter to stay a few more days, and looking at their tearful faces, she consented. A week or two later, when she started to go again, they wailed the louder until the girl decided to stay with them a little longer.

Let us leave the girl to her parents and let us go back to the Water Carrier. He was very lonely without his wife and waited for her return with four eyes. At the appointed day, he dressed himself in his best clothes and



A mosque doorway in Bursa

sat by the window to watch for her arrival. Night came and fell upon his head and there was no sign of his wife. He began to worry and wondered what was keeping her. The neighbors came to see him and they told him: "That girl, she loves you not, O Water Carrier. See, she went back to her parents and left you alone. She is not going to return, either. What would a girl like her do with a Saka?"

They talked and talked until the Water Carrier could not sit in his house any longer. Doubts and jealousies began to tear at his heart. He took a long pointed dagger, thrust it into his belt and set out to seek his wife. He went a short way, he went a long way, over rivers and hills he went a straight way and when he turned back, lo, he had gone the length of a blade of grass! So he kept on walking until the bitterness in his heart filled his whole soul. Finally he came to the house where the girl lived.

When the girl heard that her Saka was coming to see her, she ran to meet him with two silver candlesticks in her hands. They met at the door and when he saw her he remembered the words of his neighbors and his heart turned into stone. He flashed out his dagger to kill her. With a loud cry of



Thatched rooted huts in a country village

fear, the girl threw herself into the river that wound around the house.

The river took the girl straight into the sea where three fishermen were casting their nets. When they pulled them to shore they saw a girl as beautiful as the fourteenth of the moon entangled in them. The fishermen fell to quarrelling, each one claiming her as his own. Then one of them said: "We will throw an arrow and the one who brings it back will have her."

The arrow was shot and the fishermen ran after it. At that the girl ran away. Over hills and dales she ran until she came upon a miser who told her: "Girl, you are mine. I shall take you home to be my servant."

But the girl squeezed into his hands the silver candlesticks and ran away. She ran for a day, she ran for a night; finally she came by a fountain where she sat and rested.

And it came to pass that the son of the Padishah of that country was out hunting and he saw her sitting by the fountain. His mind flew out of his head at the sight of one so lovely. When his mind returned, he told the girl:

"My Sultan, you are my Kismet. Allah surely led my footsteps to this fountain. With your permission I will take you to my father and marry you."



"Alas, my Shehzade," the girl answered, "I am an unhappy and poor girl. Leave me to my fate, for I cannot marry you."

The Shehzade would not listen and he begged her to follow him to his father's castle. He pleaded so strongly that the girl relented and finally consented to follow the prince to the palace.

Once there, she was treated royally by the Padishah and given the best brocades to wear. But the girl was unhappy and day and night she thought of her Saka and wondered what had happened to him. In vain did the Shehzade plead with her to marry him, she would not change her mind. Finally she told him:

"There is a fountain near the palace; repair it for me; and whoever drinks from its waters, let him see my face reflected upon the surface."

The fountain was repaired and the girl sat at the window and watched. Come time, go time, three fishermen came by and drank its waters. But no sooner had they drunk their fill than they saw the girl's face reflected in the water. And straight they dropped down and fainted. Later the old miser came by and he, too, saw the girl's face in the fountain and he also fainted. And one day it came to pass that the Water Carrier went that way and stopped to drink some water. When he saw the image of the girl, he, too, fainted. The girl ran to the Shehzade and asked him to have all those people carried into the palace.

They were carried in and when they were revived, they saw the girl and the Shehzade. The girl said:

"Eh, my Shehzade, these fishermen drew me out of the sea, this miser insulted me and this Water Carrier was my hero and my husband."

The Shehzade listened to her tale with astonishment and when she was through he gave money to the fishermen, the miser was chased out of the palace and to the Saka he gave the girl, since she was his Kismet.

"I have wronged you, my Sultan," the Saka said to her. "Can you ever forgive me?"

For forty days and forty nights they feasted and rejoiced. They had the wish of their hearts and may we climb the ladder of ours.

Three apples fell from the sky. The one went to the teller of this tale, the other to the one who wasted his breath and the third to the one who amused the listeners.

My old nurse had learned these fairy tales when she was a young girl from a professional storyteller who used to visit my great grandmother. In



Fishermen and their boat on a lake

the old days there were special men and women called *Meddahs* who made a living by entertaining people: the men in the coffeehouse and the women in private homes. These tales were not written down and each Meddah embellished them to suit his or her taste.

As a young girl, my nurse had been brought up in the household of my great-grandmother and later, when she grew up; had come to work for my mother. Great-grandmother not only loved poetry and classical literature but fairy tales as well. Her house was always open to one of Istanbul's famous women Meddahs whose honeyed tongue delighted the women of the royal palace and the wives of the vezirs as well.

According to my old nurse, the arrival of the Meddah sent a ripple of excitement throughout great-grandmother's house, from the parlor to the kitchen. Grandmother ordered an exceptional dinner and all the dishes that the Meddah liked were cooked for her arrival. The woman usually arrived late in the evening and after she had rested and had dinner with the family, she was escorted to the parlor, where she sipped her cup of coffee. Everyone in the house hurried with the night chores, the dishes were washed and dried as quickly as possible, and then, one by one, grandmother's friends, her neighbors and the maids assembled in the parlor. If it was winter, and that is the time when stories are much appreciated, the Meddah sat close to the mangal heaped with glowing embers. The candles were lighted, the porcelain stove kept humming merrily and everyone sat silently and waited for the great woman to begin. What fascinating tales she wove in that dim room! Everyone listened breathlessly while the tall candles spluttered and glowed and at times a sigh was wrung from the listeners at the fate of the Padishah's youngest daughter whose many adventures and misfortunes were finally crowned with happiness.

The literature of the Turks starts with their history. Our earliest literary works are unwritten poems, most of them folk stories and legends. After the Turks accepted Islam, the Turkish people produced a literature in keeping with the Islamic civilization while preserving their old stories as well. Both Persian and Arabic literature provided the Turks with models, and gradually the beautiful language which we speak today was evolved, and great poets and writers left us many works called the "Divan" or classical Islamic literature. It was modelled mostly after the Persian and its philosophy is mystical. Our poets sang about the delights of the other world. They urged us to look upon this world as transient and to find true happiness in God the Permanent One. The old poets also sang about nightingales, roses, the moon and the

stars, and the poems of that period are highly sentimental and romantic.

It was only in the nineteenth century that a new school of writers appeared who turned to the West for inspiration. My grandfather, Namik Kemal, was one of these young writers. Turning to the West, Turkish literary men began to write plays, novels, short stories and articles fashioned after European patterns. The Turkish language, too, was reformed and simplified, to enable more people to read the works of Turkish authors and poets.

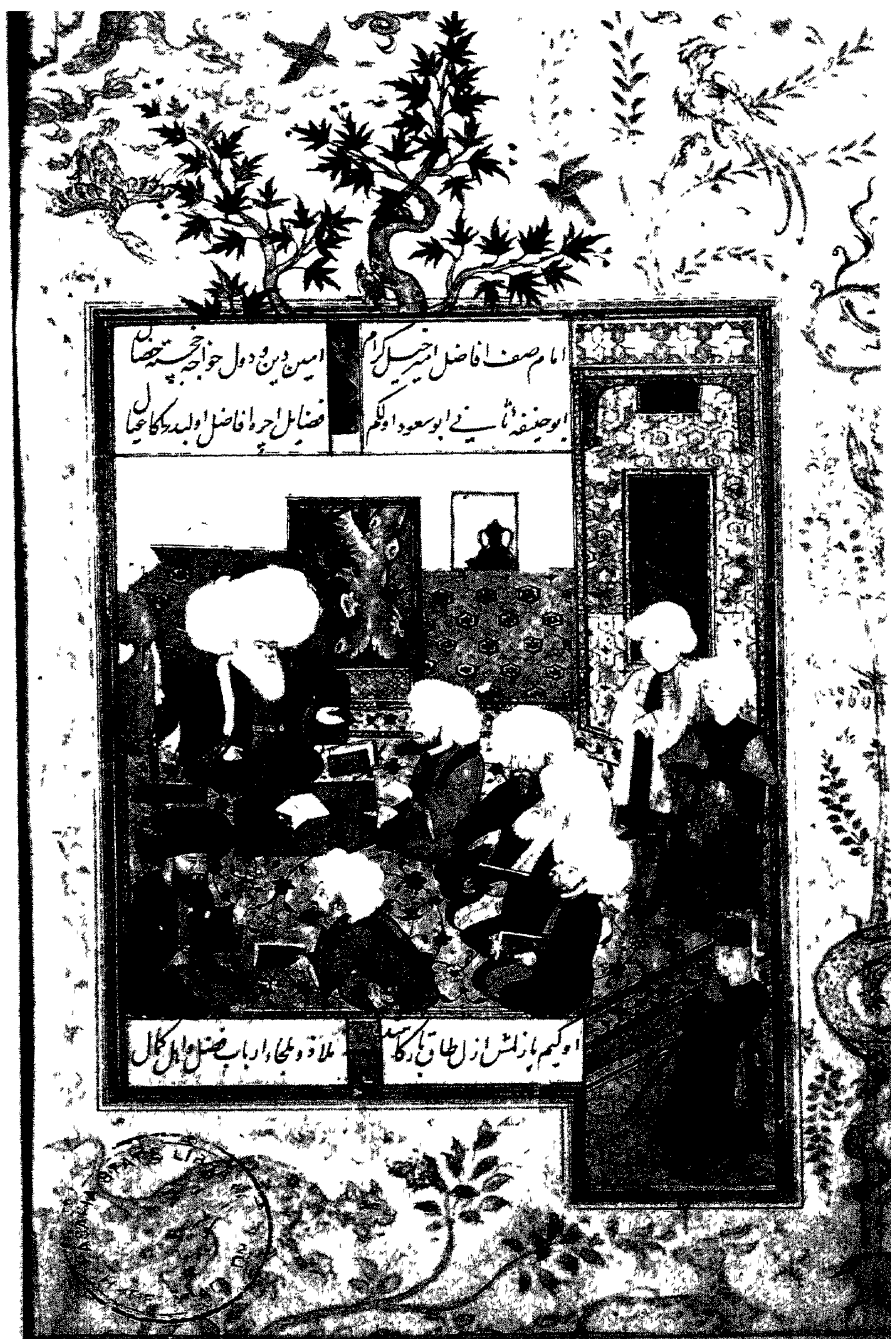
Literature under the Republic has been given a great incentive. Poetry today does not deal only with roses and other sentimental subjects, but expresses social sentiments as well. Short story writers and novelists reflect the national life and local color and dwell on social problems such as the life of Turkish workers and the impact of the freedom of women on Turkish society.

Together with the classical literature of the past, which only a handful of people could understand, we also had our folklore. It has a rich vein of popular poetry and abounds in humorous and colorful expressions. It is the literature of the Anatolian, cradled and nourished among the hills, plateaus and hamlets of the peasants.

Although a new school of literature has been founded, the Anatolian peasants still cling to their legends of old. The story of Keuroglu, who meets with extraordinary adventures is still popular. Fairy tales and fables are still told by the fireside and so are the stories of Nasreddin Hodja.

Nasreddin Hodja is an historical character, known not only in Turkey but in the Near East and the Balkans. His stories have been translated into many languages, among them English. Nasreddin typifies Turkish humor.

Not much is known about this most famous of Turkish philosophers and humorists. He was born in 1208 in a small village near Ak Shehir. His father was a village priest and had a love for learning. Nasreddin, as a boy, was sent to a *meddresseh* in Konia. At an early age, he showed a talent for storytelling and a keen sense of humor. Apparently he finished school and we find him teaching in a small village and later as *cadı*, or judge. But the life of a judge in a village did not suit Nasreddin, who finally gave up his work and joined the household of one of the numerous Turkish princes who then ruled Anatolia. With his wit and his many stories, he soon became famous and much loved by the prince. The other favorites grew jealous of the Hodja and made his life so miserable that he left the prince and attached himself to the court of the Seljuk Sultan of Konia. The Hodja was so much esteemed and trusted by the Sultan that this ruler sent him on important



THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM  
OF ART

A Turkish miniature of a Sultan and his councillors from a  
Sixteenth Century manuscript

political missions. In his old age Nasreddin left the Sultan's court and retired to Ak Shehir where he died. His tomb is still shown today at Ak Shehir, where he is buried. Before the tomb is a high gate heavily padlocked, but there is neither fence nor wall about the grave and the gate stands detached! This is typical of Nasreddin Hodja, that bearded man with a gigantic turban and spectacles, whose anecdotes brought laughter to millions of people.

There are hundreds of Nasreddin Hodja stories and some, no doubt, were made up by others and added to the real Nasreddin tales. One of my favorites was told to me by my father. It runs like this:

Nasreddin Hodja was once invited to attend a wedding. As he was busy, he did not have time to change his clothes and rushed to the wedding in his workday clothes, arriving there quite late. No one paid the slightest attention to him. He was seated at the foot of the table and the servants ignored him, so that he went home hungry.

Some time later, Nasreddin Hodja was asked to attend another wedding. This time he wore his best clothes and over them a sable fur coat. He drove to the house in a carriage. The master of the house received him at the door. He was ushered in with ceremony and after talking with the guests, he was seated at the place of honor. The servants vied with one another to serve him and the master of the house himself offered Nasreddin the best meats and pastries. Looking at his plate heaped with food, Nasreddin suddenly held a corner of his fur coat close to the plate and said:

"Eat, my fur coat, eat! All these honors are not for me, but for you alone."

Another day, Nasreddin Hodja was stretched under the shade of a huge oak tree looking up at the overhanging branches. He saw the small acorns dangling from the twigs and nearby was a vine at the end of which grew a big pumpkin. Feeling in a philosophical mood, Nasreddin said to himself:

"Allah Almighty, I do not question Your wisdom, and no doubt there is a reason for everything you do, but would it not have been better to hang the pumpkin on this huge oak and let the acorn grow on the vine?"

No sooner had he finished these words than an acorn landed on the good Hodja's nose.

"Allah forgive me for doubting His wisdom," Nasreddin said. "If the pumpkin had grown on this oak tree, what would have happened to my nose!"

Nasreddin Hodja is pictured in many prints riding on a donkey with the saddlebags on his own shoulders with the mistaken idea that he was

saving the poor beast from the extra weight. Nasreddin and his donkey figure in many stories.

It seems that the good Hodja was going through some hard times and money was scarce in his pockets. As always, he had a little donkey to carry him around from village to village. One day Nasreddin was pondering on how much the animal was costing him. The next time he fed the animal, he gave him a handful less of the customary oats. The donkey ate the lessened ration and seemed to do as much work as before. The following day, Nasreddin removed two handfuls; the third day, three, and finally the day came when the donkey had nothing to eat. The Hodja was jubilant. Where could he find another animal who could live on air? That night he went to bed happily but when he awoke the next morning and went to the stable, he found that the donkey was dead.

“Alas,” moaned Nasreddin Hodja, “just as I had trained my donkey to get along on nothing, he ups and dies!”



## *Turkey Works for Peace*

**K**EMAL ATATURK said, at the close of the War of Independence: "Give us ten years of peace and see what we can accomplish." Turkey had been at war, or in a state of preparedness, from 1912 to 1923. During those eleven years we had gone through the Balkan War, World War I and the Turko-Greek War and had known the tragedy of enemy occupation. What the country needed above all was peace. To attain that end no effort was spared. We set out to win the friendship of our neighbors and the powerful states that had been our enemies and had almost destroyed us.

The new Turkey's achievements in the international field can be classified under two main headings: (1) Working for peace. (2) The impact of the Turkish revolution on her Near Eastern neighbors and on Moslem countries in general.

At the end of the Turko-Greek War, the Turks were triumphant, having



accomplished their goal, but they were also exhausted. They found themselves in a hostile world with only one friend, the Soviet Union. Being realistic, they knew that Soviet good will had been born of Russian fears and distrust of the capitalist West. The communist revolution was not to Turkish taste and the last thing Turkey wanted was to become too dependent on the U.S.S.R. and thereby revert into a vassal state. On the other hand, suspicion of British and French designs was still strong. It looked for a time as if the new republic would have a difficult time amidst all these pitfalls.

The Sultans had kept their throne and the remnant of the Ottoman Empire by cleverly playing on the jealousies of the great European powers and Russia. Although these countries did their best to crush the Turkish Empire, not one of them was willing to see Turkey under the domination of a single state. During the Crimean War (1854-1856), France and Britain came to our aid in our war against Russia because these two countries were afraid that the Russian Bear, once installed in Istanbul and the Dardanelles, would be a menace to them. During World War I, we aligned ourselves with our ex-enemy Austria and with Germany, whom we neither trusted nor liked, to save ourselves from Russian ambitions. Thanks to these maneuvers, we had managed, for a time, to survive and ride the stormy and murky waters of power politics.

Once the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, and the republic established, Turkey abandoned her imperial policy, as she had discarded so many of her old customs and institutions, and embarked on the road that was to insure peace. Instead of wading precariously through the morass of big-power jealousies and rivalries, she set out to win the friendship of the nations with whom she dealt.

Friendship with the Soviet Union was essential. We were now a small nation, no longer a mighty empire, and day by day the U.S.S.R. was growing stronger and mightier. Efforts were made to assure Turko-Russian amity; but on the basis of equality. If the Turkish government had shown any leanings towards communism or had been willing to subordinate its foreign policy to the wishes of the Kremlin, relations between the two countries would have been more cordial. But we might have found ourselves in the very undesirable position of Poland, Yugoslavia and other satellites of the Soviet today. Up to 1945, our relations with Russia, though amicable, consisted merely of a business partnership for mutual protection and safeguarding the peace. As far as the Turks are concerned, they would like to continue in the same way.

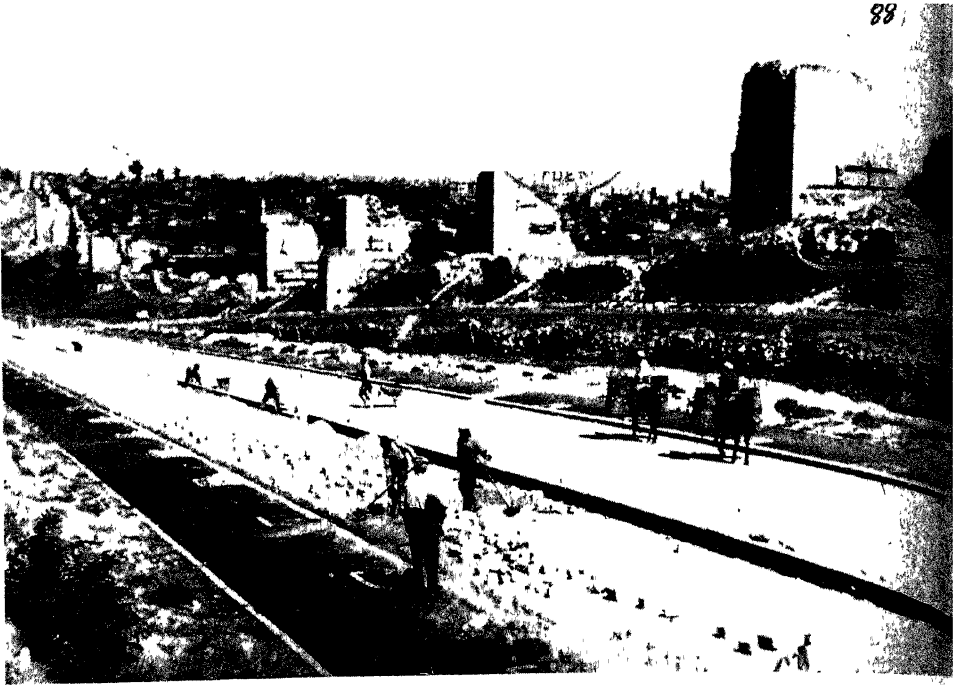


Peasant types of Kayseri

On the other hand, we tried very hard to reestablish good relations with France and Great Britain, two countries on which we had leaned heavily in the past and with whom we have a great deal in common. French culture and civilization, especially, have played an important role in our civilization. In 1926, the Anglo-Turkish Treaty was signed and from that moment relations between Turkey and Great Britain improved. This put an end to the boundary dispute between Turkey and Iraq, then under British mandate. Mosul with its rich oil fields, which the Turks wanted, was handed over to Iraq by the League of Nations and we had to accept the verdict.

With Greece, our closest neighbor, relations remained strained for a time following the war. But both countries realized the need of mutual understanding and hence in 1930 the Treaty of Friendship and Arbitration was signed, followed by the Turko-Greek Agreement, signed in 1933, which was in reality an alliance for mutual protection and defense.

Realizing that the small Balkan countries were exposed to the might of Germany, rising stronger than ever after her defeat, Turkey took the lead to



Building a modern highway

The Namrun plateau in the Taurus Mountains





A busy intersection in Istanbul

Along the Aegean shore line



form a Balkan Entente. If the Balkans and Turkey could sign a mutual-assistance pact and work jointly to resist any potential aggressor, there would be peace in Eastern Europe. After a series of negotiations the Balkan Pact between Turkey, Greece, Rumania and Yugoslavia was signed in 1934. Bulgaria refused to join despite all our efforts. Bulgaria's action considerably weakened the new Pact.

Relations with the United States have always been cordial in spite of the adverse propaganda which once flooded this country. The Turks, I must say, are very poor propagandists and they have made practically no effort to popularize the new Turkey and its accomplishments. America is one of the countries with whom we have never been at war. Even during World War I, when the United States joined Great Britain and France against Germany, she did not declare war on Turkey. All through the war, the American Colleges in Istanbul remained open and Turkish boys and girls studied there unmolested. More than ever today we are anxious to win the friendship of the United States because we feel that we have nothing to fear from her.

While the government was busy in the west, the Near East was not neglected. In 1937, the Saadabad Pact of non-aggression was signed between Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. It was hoped that later Egypt might join.

When Nazi Germany rose, more powerful than ever, Turkey found herself faced with economic domination. The Germans began to buy our fruits, nuts, cotton and tobacco in increasing amounts in return for German machinery and medicine and some non-essentials which she forced upon us. There was a time when the country was flooded with mouth organs made in Germany. This state of affairs also applied to the Balkans where Nazi Germany dominated the economic field. The Turks, who wanted neither Russian nor German domination, turned more and more towards France and Britain to counterbalance Germany's power.

It was fear of Germany and the realization that another war was in the making that drove the Turks to apply for a revision of the Straits settlement. When the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, there was a clause stating that the Dardanelles would be demilitarized and the ships passing through would come under the control of an International Commission. In 1936, just after Hitler overran the Rhineland, Turkey did not follow Germany's example and march into the demilitarized zone, as she could have done easily, but applied for a revision of the Straits settlement. The conference

met at Montreux and decided that Turkey could fortify the Dardanelles and in time of war, if Turkey was a belligerent, she would have full control over them. In time of peace the ships of all the powers could use the Straits. The Black Sea powers could have unrestricted use of the Dardanelles, provided they were helping a victim of aggression.

By then the Turkish people were alarmed at the state of the world. They saw with dismay Great Britain and France embark on a policy of appeasement. Turkey, on the other hand, believed that this weak policy would have disastrous results. She bitterly criticized Nazi Germany through her press and urged the countries of the world to work together for mutual security. The Turkish press, furthermore, was full of warnings against Germany's intentions in the Balkans. But warnings were not enough and from 1936 on Turkey tried to secure herself against a German attack. The Turks again took the lead to form a strong Balkan League and worked on Bulgaria to change her mind. Despite all our diplomatic efforts and pleadings, a strong Balkan League was never formed. So the danger from the Balkans remained. Our eastern frontier would be safe, provided the Soviet Union remained neutral and was still friendly. And at that time there was no indication that Russia would act otherwise. If she ever got embroiled in war, Turkey hoped for help from Britain and France against Germany. To make this help a reality, a Tri-Partite Treaty between Turkey, Great Britain and France was signed on May 12, 1939, with Russia's full knowledge and consent. The three countries pledged aid to each other "in the event of an act of aggression leading to war in the Mediterranean." We felt safe for a time. But a bomb-shell, in the shape of the Russo-German Pact signed in August 1939 exploded in our midst. The U.S.S.R. had joined hands with Nazi Germany! This about-face in Russian policy bewildered the world but to the Turks it was a staggering blow. It weakened our defenses considerably and exposed our eastern flank. If Germany attacked us, could we now rely on the Soviet Union?

When war finally broke out, Turkey was not involved, since Italy remained out of it and the Mediterranean was not embroiled. Foreign Minister Shukru Saracoglu hurried to Moscow to ascertain for himself what the Russo-German Pact really meant. Saracoglu was left to cool his heels while Molotov received Ribbentrop with much pomp at Moscow. Finally, after many days of waiting, the Turkish minister was received by Molotov. The meeting was short, and Saracoglu left for Turkey immediately after. What went on in Moscow is anybody's guess. It seems likely that the



Turkish boy scouts

U.S.S.R. put pressure on Turkey to abandon her treaty of mutual assistance with Britain and France. This, Saracoglu must have refused. With dignity and courage, he must have told Molotov that Turkey would not think of betraying her allies and would accept the consequences.

From that visit, our old fears of the Russian Bear were revived, and the Kremlin's attitude towards us was distinctly hostile. The fears turned into alarm when the Soviet Union cynically fell upon helpless Poland, which was bravely trying to resist the German onslaught, and when the Soviet Union annexed the small Baltic States and attacked little Finland. All this under the guise of security. The Turks were afraid that Russia might seize Istanbul and the Dardanelles with the same flimsy pretext. There is much talk today about the all-important question of security for the big powers. Many people in America have condoned the U.S.S.R. for her ruthless aggressions. Why the security of great nations should be sacrosanct and those of small countries utterly disregarded and their independence trampled upon is beyond comprehension.

Turkey has been attacked violently, especially by Russia, because she did not join the Allies, although she had a pact with Britain. The truth is that Turkey could not join the war. She lacked the modern equipment, the airplanes, the tanks, the trained personnel and the factories to fight a modern war. Suppose Turkey had declared war on Germany, when that country invaded Greece, how much help could she have expected from Great Britain, who was then fighting alone for her very life? When the Tri-Partite Pact was signed, France had some one-half million men in Syria and Lebanon, close to the Turkish border, and we expected these men to come to our help. But France was out of the war, Britain stood alone, and it was not sure that the United States would enter the war at that time. Furthermore, the Germans had pushed to the very frontiers of Turkey and her panzers were poised for an immediate attack that would have carried the Nazis clear across European Turkey into Asia Minor. If, by entering the war, Turkey could have tipped the scales in favor of Great Britain, I am sure we would not have hesitated to take up arms. But had we done so, we would have gone under and the war would have dragged along just the same. What was the use of another conquered country, another government-in-exile, to the Allied cause? It must not be forgotten, either, that, save for Britain and France, all the other countries who fought in this war were attacked first and had to join the terrible conflict. Even the mighty United States came in after Pearl Harbor and not before. Turkey is not America, nor did she enjoy



the geographical advantages that America does.

Later on, when German power declined, much pressure was put on Turkey to enter the war. Fear of the U.S.S.R. kept us out until the very end when we finally declared war on Germany. We did not want to be maneuvered into a position whereby the Red Army would march into Turkey to "liberate" our country from the Germans as it had "liberated" Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Esthonia, Lithuania, Finland, Hungary and Austria. It is not that kind of liberation we want, but independence.

The Turkish revolution has had tremendous repercussions throughout the East. Imagine a country, almost destroyed in 1919, rising to defend herself against the great powers of the world and succeeding in spite of the odds against her! This gave new hope to such Arab countries as Syria, Iraq, Palestine, who, dreaming of independence, had been forced to accept foreign mandates at the end of World War I. What Turkey had done, they too could achieve. The fire of independence was kindled more strongly than ever in the Near East.

Another lasting influence of the Turkish revolution was its effect on the Moslem world. Turkey, a Moslem country, had modernized her institutions and was rising as an independent and modern country without abandoning Islam. This was food for thought for other old Moslem states who realized that changes were imperative if they wanted to remain alive. They turned to Turkey as a model and started to follow in her footsteps. In Afghanistan and Iran, the rulers attempted the same reforms carried out in Turkey. In most cases they failed because the people of those countries were not as ready as the Turks.

I remember when I visited Iraq in 1937, the interest of the Iraqis on all matters pertaining to the new Turkey. The women eagerly questioned me about the Turkish women and the privileges they had won for themselves. Everywhere I felt a stirring, a desire for change and liberty. There is no doubt that the transformation of Turkey has aroused the Moslem countries to their own potentialities and will have a lasting effect in the Moslem world.

Turkey, in her efforts for peace, and in order to retain her hard-won independence, is once again actively seeking friends. The Soviet Union has been carrying on a war of nerves against us. We have been attacked and reviled as "Fascists," a term which has come to mean anyone who so much as dares to criticize the Soviet Union. This change in Russia's attitude has alarmed the Turks. All we want is to live at peace with our neighbors, especially with the Soviet Union. The machinations of the Soviet Union in Iran

and the events in the Balkans have certainly not abated our fears.

Once again realizing the need of collective security, Turkey has joined the United Nations and paid her dues in full. We realize that only a truly international organization can bring peace to the world and assure the independence of small nations which have neither the power, the wealth, nor the scientific knowledge to resist big power aggression.

Once again we hear the plea of our great leader, Kemal Ataturk, saying, "Give us ten years of peace." That is still our greatest aim. We need peace for our independence and to carry on the work started in 1923 after tremendous sacrifices and against overwhelming odds.

## *The End*



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